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## FEATURES

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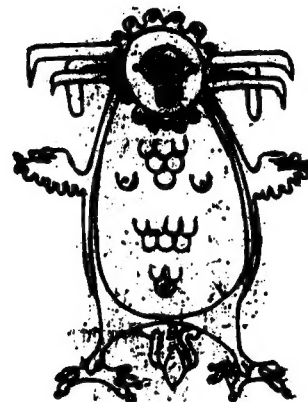
*Confessions of a Video Vixen*  
*On Manor's Mind*  
*Papal Bull*

The standard gets lower every year, but the scum keeps rising. A whole new class has seized control in the nineties: They call themselves "The New Dumb," and they have no sense of humor. They are smart, but they have no passion. They are cute, but they have no fun except phone sex and line dancing . . . They are healthy and clean and cautious and their average life-span is now over 100 years. . . That is the good news. The bad news is that there will be no year 2000, except for morphs and pimps and political junkies with no pulse. The president of the United States said that, so we have no reason to doubt it. Good luck.  
 -Hunter S. Thompson  
*Better Than Sex* (1994)

## COMICS, ART, HEADERS

Jarrett Huddleston  
 Danny Hellman  
 Kris Kozak  
 Derf  
 Crawford  
 Gus

*This goes out to Sandy: I loved you badly but it was the only way I knew. Forgive me.*



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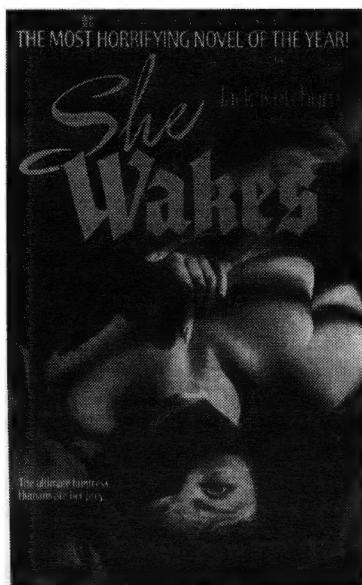
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stream running behind it. And I thought to myself, "That crime could happen here. And nobody would know—it's that isolated." And putting it in the Fifties, when I was growing up, would also be the perfect time: It's that dark underbelly of the Fifties when everything was "Ozzie and Harriet" on the surface, and it was also Joe McCarthy right beneath. And I thought: this was the perfect setting.

So literally, once I got my affairs in order and sold the house, I wrote that thing. I mean, I wrote it in a big rush: I just gulped out that book! I didn't have to do any research: It was a memory play. I adapted the real kids that Gerty corrupted. I extrapolated what little I knew of them to the kids that were on my block—and used them as models. For instance in the novel, the boy who lived up the street, with the snake in his mouth. At one point the narrator goes to his house to visit, and the boy's mother comes to the door, and she's covered with bruises. Well, that really happened to me. And there's my Dad later drinking beer with this asshole, the next night, like this guy's the nicest guy alive. And he's parading down the street in his VFW finery on Memorial Day—and this guy's beating up his wife and his kid.

I also used the actual physical locales. The physical locale—where the girl is in the basement—is my house. That's the house I grew up in; I spent a lot of time in that basement when I was a kid. It was my "room away from my room." It was a three-story house; there was an attic, a living room with two bedrooms off it, a bathroom, kitchen, and then the cellar. And the cellar, especially in the summertime, was wonderful because it was damp and cool. I used to have kids over, and we played down there—a lot. And we played some pretty strange games, too...I so I imagined a whole bomb shelter in there, to further isolate it—because bomb shelters were all the rage in those days. And the house that the boy lives in *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* is the house next door where my best friend Jerry lived when I was growing up. In the porch of their house they had this



huge window, and you could look out that window and see into my basement. So that was the point of view that I used: I put myself in the house next door, and put this unnamed horror that was going on essentially in my own backyard.

With most of my books some research is involved. But with *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR*, I knew everything. I just remembered it. So it was the easiest book to write from that perspective, but from a moral perspective it was the hardest. That is, it was a difficult technical problem for me. It was difficult because if you're writing a first-person viewpoint novel, you have to somehow deflect the reader's interest regarding the survival of whomever's narrating the story. You're not worried if my narrator's going to live; you know he's going to live because he's telling the story thirty years

later. So what you as a reader have to worry about is what he worries about. Finally, what he worries about a lot is what he's doing—or not doing—for the girl next door.

The question is, can she survive this? What will they do next to this poor girl, and her sister, for that matter? What struck me about the two girls was here this girl's taking all this shit for her weaker, younger sister. And I thought that courage is the core of the book in a lot of ways. It's certainly the moral core of the book.

**WIATER:** You speak of a moral core, yet some people have told you they consider the novel to be sheer pornography.

**KETCHUM:** People have called *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* pornography, and I can understand why they would. People have told me, "I hate that fucking book—I can't read it!" But the bond for the younger sister from the older sister is so strong that she can take anything—as long as her weaker sister is not harmed. And added to that is the idea that this boy, who at some points is reprehensible, because he says nothing, he does nothing—will he come around? Ever? And if he does, it is too late?

On the other hand, what was done to this girl in real-life was more unspeakable than I even wrote. There were things that Nash described in *BLOOD LETTERS AND BADMEN* I decided to change a little because I didn't think they'd be acceptable in fiction, whereas it is acceptable in non-fiction. In non-fiction, you can bite off nipples if that's what happened, but you shouldn't do it in a book that's basically considered an entertainment.

I also didn't want to "participate" in child abuse. But I did want you as a reader to feel what it would be like to be on the borderline of child abuse. I don't know who said this—it might have been you—where the reader of *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* is also an accomplice to the crime. But that's what I was after: I wanted to make you fucking nervous! That to even turn the next page may be a crime....

This goes back to an old nightmare of mine, and this notion of complicity; I wrote about it in my story, "Mall Order." At one point in college I was dating this woman who was a model, and who wanted to be an actress. We had a brief affair, and I never saw her again after she left Boston. Several years later, the movie *Snuff* came out. Remember? They were promoting it as possibly a real snuff film. So I went through this moral dilemma: do I see it if it's a real snuff film? After all, I'd seen everything else in horror. So, what if it's real? I finally decided: if it's real, I've got to see it. I need to see it. Because? I need to...! You know? It's that Kurosawa quote: I just cannot look away. It's not my business to look away. So I went.


It turned out to be an Italian film, a lousy Manson Family rip-off, which at the very end the producers had tacked on 15 to 20 minutes of much more graphic new footage. But you don't see the face of the actress playing the victim until that part of the movie is almost over. Well, my heart went up into my throat, because I took one look at the woman—and I had seen her naked because I had had an affair with her—and I thought it was *THIS* woman!

Then I realized: one, you're paying to see what may still be a real snuff movie. And second, you may be paying to watch the murder of someone you know! I sat there, rigid




with terror, until I finally realized the effects were fake. Also, it wasn't the same actress, just a very close look-alike. But that notion of complicity in a crime—while you're being entertained—happens in *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR*. You turn the page? I dare you. You know? I dare you. Are you that much of a voyeur? You want to watch this any further? Well, do you? Do you? Do you? I hope you do—because that's part of the moral dilemma I'm positing.


**WIATER: What was your editor's reaction to the novel when you turned it in?**

 KETCHUM: My editor loved it—he wanted to do it in hardcover. He wanted to do both *COVER* and *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* in hardcover; so he told me. But Warner Books wouldn't do either. My editor felt we got very close with *COVER*, and slightly less so with *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* because it was so violent. But he was pushing for it, and thought we had a shot in both cases. So they both got kind of lost, before they were even published.


**WIATER: Considering that you obviously based the story on a true incident, was there ever any thought to making mention of that in an afterward or through the promotion of the book itself?**

 KETCHUM: I wanted it to be published and publicized that way. I suggested that to Warner Books and they didn't want to have anything to do with it. They didn't think it was relevant. You can understand where Warner Books was coming from, just by looking at that stupid cover. They hadn't a clue what to do with it! I used to think that because the story was so extreme, that may have been one of the reasons they put that cover on it. But I was later told by my editor that this cover was actually decided upon by the president of the company at that time. Maybe he had seen *Return to Horror High*, or maybe his kids had rented it. Because that's all the cover really is, a rip-off of a lousy, low-budget horror film called *Return to Horror High*. They just dumped that book in the hopper.

**WIATER: Given that sterling treatment from your publisher, what sort of reviews did *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* receive when it was published?**


 KETCHUM: I don't think it ever got a review. It was subsequently reviewed in a few places. Horror critic Chas. Baiun wrote a lengthy column on it, which I saw much, much later after it first appeared. I've still yet to meet Chas., but he was crazy about it. But again, this was from a time when I don't know about reviews. I certainly didn't know about the alternative press, so to speak, and there was no mainstream coverage of it at all. No doubt because of the cover, and because the publisher didn't put any copies out. But the reviewers in the alternative press were very happy with it—I just didn't know about it at the time.

**WIATER: What are your feelings towards the novel, looking back on the cult following it has obtained over the years?**

 KETCHUM: It's one of my favorites. I think I did it right. Rereading it now, I'm still proud of it; I'll still stand by it.

I think I dealt with some important issues in a very responsible and evil way. (laughs) I also love *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* because it's about my hometown, and it's about growing up in the Fifties and the Sixties. In its gentler moments, there's some fond recollections there. The carnival scene. What it smells like in the summertime with the cut grass. So even though it's real dark, it has for me a melancholy, elegiac sense to it.


**WIATER: How do you push yourself to be so explicit with, as you term it, the minutiae of violence? Even Stephen King once reportedly described your work as "Great—but gross!"**

 KETCHUM: Well, I consult with physicians often. (laughs) I really do! The stepfather of the woman I live with, Paula White, is a retired doctor, and I call him often. I'll say, "If I do this to that part of the body—what will be the result?" And he'll tell me—in great detail—and quite cheerfully.

I look at the violence very closely, and play it back, frame by frame. If I am doing violence, then at that point—in my mind—I'm doing a movie. If I'm doing character, I'm doing a novel. And if I'm doing a description of something real, say of a highway—how it smells or feels or tastes—then I'm doing something slightly different again. It's an old trick, a simple trick—I think anyone who's worth anything as a writer does it—but you've got to engage the senses. Every sense.

I'm very careful to wrap the reader around in smells and touches and sights. I like the sense of touch—with violence particularly, I try to get that sense of touch. Of what it feels like for flesh to part. Is it hot? Is it cold? I try to engage those senses; I just think that way. Especially when I'm writing scenes of violence I think that way in particular.

**WIATER: When do you say to yourself "Enough is enough—I better pull back, I've just gone too far."**

 KETCHUM: I've never—voluntarily—pulled back on any scene of violence I've ever written. I kind of know what the edge of my moral envelope is, and stick to it. It happens to be a fairly far out edge.

In *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR*, I had that one line where the boy says, "I'm not going to tell you about this." But I knew that actually showing that scene was going to be too much. I didn't want to talk about the scene; it would have grossed me out. That would have been over my own top, and I didn't want to do it. I thought it would have changed the tone of the book to pornography had I done that particular scene. I didn't know how to do it without making it pornography. I just couldn't engage that, head on. I also felt that, hell, there's enough in that book that is engaged head on.

If you look at *THE GIRL NEXT DOOR* closely, a lot of the action is like Conan the Barbarian in that the blood-letting is more off-camera than on. You don't see a lot of the horror that you might see, because the boy is next door all the time. That was a very useful mechanism in writing this book, so that I could have him observe the results of violence rather than their actual occurrence. If he had observed every moment—I would have gone over the edge. Nobody would publish it! I would be down at some 42nd Street stand, hawking my own personal snuff movie.

As it is, there's more resultive violence than there is actual violence. But what you do see is startling enough so that you can imagine, fairly vividly, what you don't.

So I do know what my personal top is. But I keep trying to push the edge. In JOYRIDE, for example, there's material that pushes that edge: the nipple-slicing Jesus! But again, that's remembered by one of the characters: it's not presented in its full sight-sound-touch.

**WIATER: Your characters often engage in black or gallows humor, perhaps to try and perhaps lighten the mood subconsciously for the reader as well.**

KETCHUM: I like black humor—I'm very attracted to it. And I think it's important in the kinds of books that we do to leaven them with some kind of humor, otherwise it just becomes too grim.

**WIATER: Certainly you've been accused of being "too grim" once or twice in your career?**

KETCHUM: When I did my first book, a friend of mine brought me over to the All State Cafe, and introduced me to a friend of his. And he said to her, "This is my friend Dallas, and he's just published his first book." And she said, "Oh, really? Great! What's it called?" And I said, "Well, I write under the name Jack Ketchum, and it's called OFF SEASON." And then she said, "You motherfucker!" and walked away! She'd obviously read the book. (laughs) And I thought to myself, "Hey, I'm doing something right here!" At least she didn't say, "I started it, but I just couldn't get into it...." I would have loved for her to give me a hug, but barring that, this reaction was the next best thing! (laughs)

**WIATER: One of your recurring themes is to present characters who appear to be helpless victims at first, but later find an inner resource of courage which allows them to at least be survivors, if not always heroes, by the end of the tale.**

KETCHUM: Yes, I write about people rising to the occasion. Or trying to. One of the conceits of OFF SEASON is exactly that: I took two heroines, and I did the PSYCHO "trick" in that I killed the stronger heroine off—in the first reel, so to speak—and you're left with the woman who doesn't believe she has much to go on. And it turns out she has it all. She finds her rage, she finds her courage, she finds the simple will to survive. And that theme is in everything I've done. I don't think I've ever written anything that didn't have that element. It's almost like a "wish" for me. I wish for my friends to have this gift. For the people that I care about: I wish them always to be able to rise above what they think they can do, to do better. It's also a wish for myself.

For all the violence in my books, I think they're basically fairly optimistic about the human potential: "We may get slaughtered, murdered, have our ears cut off...but then we can still go beat the bad guys!"

**WIATER: Your only supernatural novel to date has been SHE WAKES. It's often stated that writers deal with the supernatural because they are, to a certain extent, attempting to first scare themselves as well as their intended audience.**

**Yet you've mentioned elsewhere that supernatural horror doesn't have that affect on you?**

KETCHUM: Generally, supernatural horror just doesn't scare me, unless it's in the hands of a master. Stephen King has scared the hell out of me. In terms of supernatural horror, he's certainly scared the hell out of me with books like 'SALEM'S LOT. Peter Straub, of course. T.E.D. Klein's book, THE CEREMONIES. They can do it to me—but I really can't do it to myself. I just can't sit there and daydream of ghosts.

The only time I was really scared—in a supernatural sense—was when I was in Greece. That's probably why I set SHE WAKES in Greece, because of that scene where my sort of "Van Helsing" character walks into the beehive tomb at night. And he hears this sound that throws him to his knees, and he has to pay homage to it before it will shut up—that actually happened to me. And it scared the FUCK out of me!

Access to the unknown or the paranormal has happened to me occasionally. It's a part of my religious upbringing, I think. It's a throwback to when I was raised a Jesus Christ fan—and I was a fan; I looked all over for Jesus, never found him. It also goes back to my boyhood—our boyhoods—where everything is sort of awesome.

Like Halloween night, where we were allowed to go around after dark. Onto strange streets. To visit strange houses we'd never been able to go to before. Those are memories that you and I have, that kids today unfortunately don't have. But that sense that the dark itself is scary. And it's not just because there may be people in the dark, it's that total lack of light which in itself is scary. Every time I've ever had a frisson of supernatural fear, it's always been in a dark, dark, primordial dark place. An old cistern can make me crazy. There's nothing in there—except a sense of the dark being greater than you.

And so that experience in Greece was actually the key to writing SHE WAKES, stepping into that beehive tomb and hearing that weird sound. In Greece, I sensed a spiritual grandeur that I've never experienced anywhere else. Except in deep woods. When I lived in New Hampshire for nine months, at night I would go down by the beaver pond and look up at the stars, and I would feel something akin to that grandeur.

The dark is my church.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This exclusive interview with the award-winning dark suspense writer Jack Ketchum first appeared in a deluxe limited edition of Ketchum's novel, THE GIRL NEXT DOOR. Information about that book, which contains a new introduction by Stephen King, may be obtained by contacting The Overlook Connection Press, P.O. box 526, Woodstock, GA 30188. Wiater himself is the award-winning author of no less than three volumes of interviews: DARK DREAMERS: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MASTERS OF HORROR, DARK VISIONS: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MASTERS OF THE HORROR FILM, and with Stephen R. Bissette, COMIC BOOK REBELS: CONVERSATIONS WITH THE CREATORS OF THE NEW COMICS.



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# THE DUST OF THE HEAVENS





by **JACK KETCHUM**

Kenneth is dying of AIDS.

His ex-wife called me.

He's in a Pennsylvania hospital which Helene says he'll never leave because he's much too weak to work and there's no one to care for him at home nor any money for hospice care. So they'll keep him in the hospital the two months or so it takes him to die.

That's all they give him, two months.

Which means, among other things, that he won't be coming after me any more.

I can call off the dogs.

*He arrived at the hospital via the cops . . .*

Kenneth is my age, forty-seven. His son Colin goes to college in New Jersey. Helene and Colin had seen him over Christmas and noted that the anti-psychotic pills seemed to be working. He was calm and relatively reasonable. Though he did look *physically* ill. Alarming so. They suggested he get himself a checkup right away but suspected he'd ignore that advice. Apparently he did.

Knowing, I'm sure, just how much good a checkup was going to do him.

Then in April he must have gone off the pills or else he was experimenting with his dosage again because Colin started getting calls at the dormitory, crazy calls, the kind Kenneth makes from time to time, and finally he wouldn't speak to his father any more. To his father, Colin just wasn't in. So Kenneth responded by telling whoever was fielding the calls for him that he'd better hear Colin on the line *right now* or he was coming over there armed and dangerous and there was going to be a whole lot of blood on the floor by the time he left. When he hung up they phoned the New Jersey police who in turn called the Pennsylvania police who arrested him for making terrorist threats to innocent college kids and Kenneth was back in the hands of the system again.

Not the first time.

In fact the last I'd heard he'd gone to jail was less than a year ago. He'd walked into a police station to accuse Helene of child abuse. Walked in with a paper bag over his head to protect his anonymity because he knew that there was a warrant out for his arrest on charges of threatening his mother's life.

Kenneth - the Unknown Plaintiff.

It took the cops a few hours to convince him to remove the bag. Eventually, he did.

Anyhow, by the time the blood-on-the-floor incident rolled around the police in Pennsylvania already knew him better than they'd ever wanted to - still they did the decent thing. Instead of taking him to the slammer they brought him to a state psychiatric facility and checked him in.

Kenneth is a paranoid schizophrenic. Has been for many years now.

A fine, brilliant soul living in a jungle-maze of misfired synapses and bio-chemical warfare which sooner or later might well have found him lost and dead anyhow. Had not the AIDS come along.

He's also my oldest friend.

We go all the way back to junior high together. To 1958 I think, though we may have met even earlier. Oddly enough Kenneth would be the one to know this. I bet he could pin the year down cold. My own grip on dates, time and events has always been shaky at best and grows worse as I get older. But Kenneth collects events - real or imagined - *or a mix of both* - the way a squirrel collects nuts for winter. The way, the old joke goes, a woman stores her grievances. Dates and times always seemed to center him, to pin him down to reality. Even then.

"Great art," he wrote me once, "is the dust of the heavens."

Sad thought - but beautiful too.

*This in the midst of a long rambling letter that detailed how the State of New Jersey was out to destroy him.*

But it was art and the love of art that threw us together - his for painting, mine for books. We couldn't help it. We were both precocious as hell. Nor could we help the fact that caring about either of these two things was bound to set us apart from everybody else we knew, from every other kid we hung around with. Nobody else was going to get passionate about Shakespeare or D.H. Lawrence or Michelangelo or Paul Klee. Nobody else was going to sit up all night during a sleepover leafing through art books and reading Ray Bradbury aloud. Not a soul. We were stuck with each another.

Fine. I was amazed to even have *found* a kindred spirit in our little suburban New Jersey town. Certainly not somebody so enthusiastic and so generous, so much into sharing his enthusiasms. Without even quite knowing it we set out to educate each other. Especially the kinds of stuff you weren't going to find in school. We were teenagers after all. In the grip of our gonads. In a repressive place and time.

So I turned him on to LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER and Henry Miller's TROPICS and JUSTINE by de Sade. He introduced me to the German Expressionists, their grim perversity, to romantic pre-Raphaelite nudes sexy as anything in *Playboy* and to Lautrec's dancers, drunkards, whores.

He started writing some. I tried painting. We'd go down into my damp dark basement and Kenneth would set up a canvas for me and hand me the paints and I'd do awful, ridiculous imitations of Jackson Pollack.

I couldn't even get the drip right. Never mind the smear.

While he worked in oils and produced these

amazing abstract studies on the other side of the room in the same time it took me to realize that I'd failed again. Shapes like catacombs filled with light, like Nemo's *Nautilus* gliding through a cavernous sea.

He was much more advanced in his craft than I was at mine. It didn't bother me.

Though later on, it bothered him. In time it came to bother him a lot.

*And I think it was then that I began to fear him slightly, that I began to draw away.*

We got into photography. With his savings from work after school he bought some second-hand equipment and set up a darkroom in his basement. I photographed girlfriends. Or would-be girlfriends. He photographed forests, brooks, trees. Human subjects didn't much interest him. We spent practically every Saturday in his basement for a while, developing, fudging, cropping and printing, awash in the smell of chemicals and silent under the dim red lights.

It was just about the only time I ever saw his house. And even that was fleeting. Barely a moment to gaze at his mother's Japanese prints on the wall or pass his father's World War II model airplanes, wave a quick hello to whichever one of them was at home at the time - they never seemed to be together there - and then hit the stairs.

I remember Kenneth in dim lights.

The red light from the basement.

The night-light by my bedside.

Sleepovers were big then, all through high school. Kenneth slept at my house many times.

I at his house - never.

The reason was, ostensibly, that his mother didn't like having company around when she got up in the morning. That didn't make a whole lot of sense to me but then I hardly knew his mother. She was just a college teacher like his father who smiled at me whenever I showed up at his house and who collected Japanese art. She had a nice smile. It was hard to believe she was the awful bitch that Kenneth said she was. That she'd lock him out of the house at night if he was five minutes late. That she was prone to frequent rages, trying to slap hell out of him over some imagined affront. That she went through his drawers and stole his money.

She was just this little dumpy Italian lady with a pretty smile. That's all I saw.

Certainly my mother didn't believe him.

We'd talk after he left.

"How could a mother *be* that way?" she'd ask me. "A mother?"

She figured he had to be exaggerating. It was impossible to blame her. It would be years before TV and media started showing us babies dropped out of windows or scalded to death or drowned and dumped in dumpsters.

Was Kenneth an abused child? I don't think anybody will ever know for certain. Like my mother I thought he was exaggerating at the time - even then he was given to bouts of self-aggrandizing, mysteriousness, wild flights of fancy. It was part of his charm. Part of his

precocity.

Now I'm not so sure. Knowing where he went and the hard road he took to get there it seems likely to me that he was telling us the truth. But nobody really bought it then. Not even me.

But you had to see that *something* strange was going on.

I've never seen a kid spend so much time at somebody else's house as Kenneth spent at mine. Not before or since. Overnights, after school, weekends. Many nights he ate dinner with us before the two of us started our six-to-ten shift at my father's soda-fountain-candy store. My dad was not fond of Kenneth or of having him at his table. He'd hired him only at mom's insistence.

Art, in my dad's book, was not a man's game.

But then, neither was literature.

He had no say in it though because by then Kenneth and my mother had sort of adopted each another. Once again, I had no problem with that. I was an only child. I like the company. But these two were truly diligent in their relationship and serious about maintaining it. There were nights I'd fall asleep on the couch while the two of them sat up and talked far into the night. It was my mother - not Kenneth's - who received cards and gifts for Mother's Day. Whose birthday he remembered.

He spent every Christmas with us for eight years.

Even my dad got a present.

It was hard, eventually, to tell my mother that the Kenneth she knew wasn't the same anymore, wasn't *sane* anymore. That he scared me.

Helene thinks and I agree that the worst of it began with his marriage and then took a quantum leap after Colin was born.

Before that, through college at Rhode Island School of Design and work at design firms like Germaine Monteil he'd shown constant promise - if a tendency toward high egoism and defensiveness that often found him butting heads with the bosses. But his work was getting noticed. He had paintings at the OK Harris gallery in Manhattan, sharing space with Warhol and Jasper Johns. Art maven's Ivan Karp and Leo Castelli were admirers.

Through all those years we kept in close touch.

I remember a lot of firsts with Kenneth. The first time I ventured into Newark after dark was with him - to see Mamie Van Doren *Live!* at the Art Theatre after her nude appearance in *Playboy*. My first trip to Manhattan without my father was also with him, to a party hosted by Andy Warhol, during which I thought I'd died and gone to heaven, that I'd somehow managed to pick up the most beautiful woman in the room until she turned around to get a drink at the bar and the dark tufts of hair down her backbone told me I'd picked up the most beautiful guy in the room instead. The first time I smoked pot was in his dorm at RISD. I had my first cognac there too. Unfortunately, the same night.

*And he was the first to tell me and make me believe that it was possible that I could someday write as well as the people I was reading - that in*



*me lay the potential for at least a spec of artistry.*

As the seventies rolled around I got involved with a woman and moved to Manhattan and Kenneth married and settled across the river in New Jersey. Meetings were sporadic. And most often, uncomfortable. It was like he wasn't talking to us anymore, he was putting on a show instead. His Kenneth-the-Genius show. It was important to pour over the paintings, admire them, and to talk about them in great detail, to talk endlessly about his plans for future works, their technology, subject matter, where and when he was going to show them when the time was exactly right. It was important to allow him to rant bitterly at his cheapskate bitch-witch of a mother. It was important to listen to him blast away at all those critics and dealers who weren't exactly pounding the doors down to get his stuff.

Helene didn't help. I think she was in awe of him at first. For a woman with little artistic talent of her own to speak of and only a moderate education Kenneth was a pretty heady brew. I'd seen him bowl over people far more sophisticated. You couldn't blame her.

One day he announced to me that she was pregnant.

There was going to be no abortion. Kenneth was going to be a father.

I tried like hell to talk him out of it, so did my girlfriend. We stressed the practical reasons - like he wasn't making a whole lot of money and why did he want the burden of a kid just then - but I think we were both well aware that Kenneth's ego was already beginning to run amok. That his ego could *swamp* a kid.

Which I guess it almost did.

The last time I saw him he arrived unannounced at my apartment in the middle of the day. I'd been working.

I was surprised - to put it mildly. He'd obviously been put off with me for about a year now. The reason was mostly that both Paula and I refused to thank him terribly seriously when he talked about the elaborate murder conspiracy he was documenting which had, he said, already taken the life of a New Jersey doctor and a teenager, Kenneth's second cousin - a faked suicide in a police-station holding cell - and which involved high-level Mafioso types with political ties to both his mother and other members of his mother's side of his family.

Nor would we take seriously that he had recently acquired a direct psychic mainline to both Mother Teresa and the Dali Lama.

Nor his assertions that Helene was abusing Colin and that his mother was engaged in slowly poisoning his father to death.

And certainly not his notion of avoiding child-support payment to the by-now-hated bitch Helen by faking a new Social Security number and tax returns and then fleeing to a concrete bunker of his own design and execution somewhere deep in the Pennsylvania hills, surrounded by wild bears which he would train with jars of honey and coyotes he would tame to guard him against all trespassers - Mafia, police, or FBI. All of whom were supposedly on his case by now.

Paula and I were buying in to none of it.

There was too much dope in his life for one thing. And too many pills.

My own individual offenses were worse. I had suggested that now as a couple of times before a hospital was where he belonged. That he was doing himself no good this way. That he needed help.

Which made me part of the problem. The problem was that no one would believe what he *knew to be true*.

The whole damn ball of yarn.

He'd resented me for quite a while.

His own career had faltered, while I had just published my third novel - and if I wasn't getting rich out here in writing-land I was at least holding my own, making a living, doing what I'd always wanted to do, what so many years ago we'd talked about doing. It looked like the pupil had somehow slipped by the master, to him at least. He made it known to me that beyond my first book he had never read me and didn't intend to. That I had sold out in his judgement - I had written a *popular novel*. And while he could admire its craft . . . well, *craft* was part of the problem too.

There wasn't any room for an artist these days.

Just guys like me.

copouts. Sellouts. Panderers.

Adding insult of injury I'd managed a long-term relationship with a woman while Kenneth's own marriage had ended bitterly, explosively. Since then he'd been screwing a guy here, a lady there. Nothing that held. Nothing that worked. It didn't help the situation that my particular woman had no patience with him - with his monologues, his wild complicated stories and his artist posturings. She'd challenge him at every turn. I tried to mediate. It never worked. Not for a minute.

I think he began to hate her long before he started hating me.

I think it galled him that I hung on to such a bitch  
Yet *another bitch*.

So I was surprised to see him at my apartment that day.

We sat down at the table over coffee. He was thinner - too thin I thought - nervous, and seemed to have trouble getting the words out. As though his lips or teeth were bothering him. Coke, I thought. Drugs again.

He wasn't staying long, he told me.

He'd only come to warn me about something.

His own phone was tapped and he suspected that as a friend of his, so was mine.

Otherwise he'd have phone me.

He had proof, finally.

*That his mother was a witch.*

He wasn't talking metaphor. According to Kenneth his mother had revealed herself to him as the genuine article - a bona fide minion of

Satan.

He'd gone to New Jersey to confront her with the knowledge that she'd been systematically poisoning his father and demanded to see him. His father was too ill to be disturbed, she said - he was dying of bone cancer. They argued. Kenneth insisted.

She flew into a rage.

And, he said, he watched, stunned, as her head did a three-hundred-sixty-degree turn on her shoulders. *A la Linda Blair. A la The Exorcist.*

It might have been funny.

It wasn't.

In fact no horror movie has ever chilled me so completely.

It was the solemnity, the openness - openness even to ridicule this time - the absolute conviction that he had seen what he had seen that was so scary. However impossible, however crazy this was, for the first time I saw that not only did he believe what he was telling me - just as he believed the conspiracies and the open line to Mother Teresa - but that somehow he had actually *seen* this thing. *Observed* it.

It wasn't imagined reality. It *was* reality.

And this time I didn't deny him. I listened carefully. Respectfully.

I asked questions. I poured him a second cup of coffee.

I wasn't humoring him. whatever this construct he'd made for himself was, you simply had to respect it. That's how bit it was. It had power, pure and simple. A power that to him was undeniable and irresistible. There was a sort of truth here, I realized - there was also genuine terror. The end result for me was humility. I listened.

And it became clear that for some reason he needed to get this story out specifically to *me*. I didn't know why.

We just sat and talked. About the impossible.

At the end of it he actually seemed satisfied. Relaxed. The two of us oddly more at peace with one another than we'd been in a very long time.

A few moments passed in silence I remember. Then I could see him tense again.

And I finally understood why it was me he had to say this to.

*His mother, he told me, was capable of doing anything now. She was going to try to hurt him. Hurt him bad. He knew that. And he was preparing for it. I shouldn't worry - not about him.*

*But he was seriously afraid she might try to get to him through his friends.*

*Especially through me.*

He said he felt I was in danger.

So he was not going to see me again. Not for a very long time. He was changing his phone number and he wasn't going to give me the new one. If she didn't think we were in touch anymore than maybe she'd leave me alone. It was

worth trying. Other than that he was afraid he couldn't protect me.

He was worried.

He'd write once in a while. If that was okay.

I said it was.

There were tears in his eyes. Kenneth never cried.

I reached over and took his hand.

*It was only much later, after a late-night phone call, that I realized where those tears were coming from and why - and what he was really saying to me.*

I walked him out of the apartment. I said I had some errand or other but what I really needed was a drink. That and to get him out of there.

He'd shaken me.

The day was bright and sunny - summer in the City. I remember that we didn't have much to say.

Then just as we reached the subway station a rock came out of nowhere and landed right in front of me - not two steps away. It hit hard and I watched it bounce about fifteen feet into the air.

It easily could have killed me.

My nerves didn't need this. Not today.

I looked up to see if there was some kind of construction going on in the high rise above us but couldn't see any. In my mood I was basically looking for someone to sue I think.

I looked at Kenneth. He was *smiling*.

*"Watch your step," he said. "See?"*

For the second time that day I felt a chill along my spine.

Because at that moment I shared his fear completely, I embraced it and it was mine. I felt her hand reach out to me and it was a cold hand and unyielding. For that single split-second he made me a believer. That it was possible. That *anything* was possible. I could almost grasp, almost feel, exactly how small a step it was from my reality to his.

And his was terrifying.

Then it was gone. I was back in my world again.

Safe.

From Pennsylvania he wrote, "eventually the manipulation of the environment around me began. I got images on my TV set that were pure nightmares. The stores I bought from, had things on the shelves that were impossible to sell because of legality and utter rarity. I was surrounded by impersonators who would repeat my private telephone conversations loud enough for me to overhear. The effort to drive me crazy was so expensive I understood it could break the county budget. The local residents who have witnessed this spectacle have gone into revolt, scared by this high-tech invasion of rural nowhere."



By the time I got the phone call, the Kenneth I knew was gone, sunk beneath the weight of a thousand fears and fancies.

What was left was paranoia. And rage.

Rage against Catholics, Jews, governments, friends and family. Employers, galleries - the entire world which could not see what he could see.

I was not exempt.

He called late one night and started shouting. That I had betrayed him. That Paula had betrayed him. And that *anybody* who betrayed him - *everybody* - was going to pay. They were going to pay with blood and pain because he wasn't going to take this lying down anymore, he was done forgiving. Done forever. His voice was thick with meanness.

He scared hell out of me.

The following day I bought an answering machine.

I left it on all day and all night. I described him to the doormen in my building and gave them his name and told them that we were never at home to this person, never, not under any circumstances whatsoever.

On the machine he left a single message - a loud *"fuck you!"*

Full of fury.

the hang-up calls, the long empty silences, went on and on.

I realize now that he'd warned me about this. That this day might come.

He'd told me it was his mother I had to worry about. But it wasn't.

It was him.

And then, because he couldn't help it, he'd cried.

When a friend of yours disappears into madness there's not really any time, any moment to mourn his passing. These things happen gradually. They creep up on you like a god damn thief. You know that your friend is somewhere out there *in* the world. He's still alive. He's not himself but he's there. And maybe he haunts you the way Kenneth haunted me.

Frustrating you. Pissing you off.

*Frightening you.*

There's anger and a sense of waste.

But no love. Not really.

You can't love insanity *and that's what he is right now*, that's *who* he is.

It defines him.

The man, the boy I was such good friends with has been gone from me for a very long time, in and out of a wrongheaded marriage and a botched career, in and out of mental hospitals, in and out of jails. I stopped answering his long, rambling, often accusatory but meticulously

hand-written letters three years ago, just a few months ago, he finally stopped writing.

But I guess that because I knew he was still alive somewhere in Pennsylvania, because I was scared of him and frustrated by what he'd become and because I didn't *want* to see him - and maybe because I'd known him so long in so many incarnations it was damn near impossible to imagine a world without Kenneth in it - I'd never mourned him.

I'm mourning now.

*"I feel sorry for you,"* Kenneth wrote bitterly in his last letter to me, *"because you do not have one good story to tell."*

He was taking me to task for selling out again.

*Kenneth, I hope that this, at least, proves you wrong.*

I wish you could read it. The old you. Not the later you and certainly not the dying.

Goodbye, old friend.

I miss you.



A  
**BRUTARIAN**  
**INTERVIEW**

**SONNY**  
**ROLLINS**

By **HANK BORDOWITZ**

At 66, Sonny Rollins has begun to feel his age a little. Ever the fire brand on stage, off-stage life has slowed down considerably.

Once upon a time Rollins spent his nights on the pedestrian walkway of the Williamsburg Bridge, using it as the New York City equivalent of a woodshed. There, for two years he blew for his own edification, notes flowing like the East River below him. Jazz fans knew it from the breakthrough album he recorded after this two year break, one of the true post-bop classics, *The Bridge*. Non-jazz fans found out via a phone company commercial that portrayed him on the bridge and on stage.

"That was a very famous thing," he recalls. "At the time, it was quite a big breakthrough for a jazz musician, to get that kind of treatment on American TV. It was sort of a mini-biography of myself in a commercial. It was really quite a good step forward for the image of musicians, and I'm very proud that happened. Not that I'm proud of myself. I'm proud that I could be involved in something that was a breakthrough for the presentation of musicians in a favorable light on TV. It was an important thing at the time. It was quite unusual."

For someone with the reputation of a brash and arrogant musician, in person Sonny Rollins seems surprisingly low key, modest and considered. The simple act of survival - after years of heroin abuse, the late nights and "jazz lifestyle" that left so many of his contemporaries by the wayside - apparently agrees with him. He'd just come off the road, back to his home in one of the more bucolic areas of New York State. His biggest complaint about the trip had nothing to do with bad promoters, unappreciative audiences, or anything like that.





**Rollins:** What can I tell you? Hotel food, not too good. We usually come in and stay at the airport hotel for convenience, so we don't usually get a chance to go downtown to the restaurants. You're in trouble. Hotel restaurants are pretty bad.

**Brutarian:** That must make staying on the road tough.

**Rollins:** It's beginning to. At one time I didn't mind all these things. After a while, you really have to watch it. My wife Lucille and I are health conscious now. We have to watch our diets and eat good food and everything. It's a little bit more difficult.

**Brutarian:** It's certainly a big change from when you were younger. A lot of things are different from forty years ago.

**Rollins:** I would say so, but some things are pretty much the same.

**Brutarian:** Like what?

**Rollins:** When I started out we had a lot of segregated hotels. In that way, things are a little better. You can stay in a clean hotel. I've had to stay in some funky hotels during my time.

**Brutarian:** Even in the funky hotels, there was some good food.

**Rollins:** Often you would find that. But when you are young, you can eat a lot of greasy food, or food that might taste good, but not be good for you. I was playing in Boston the other night. A friend of

mine was there, and he was telling his kid, "Well, Sonny doesn't eat that kind of food." The kid said, "Well, doesn't Sonny ever eat at McDonald's?" And the father said "No." So you see, there's a lot of greasy food that might taste good when you're ten or fifteen or even twenty-five years old, but actually it's no good for you. I could remember back, not that long ago, places that had great fried chicken. There are places in Cleveland that have great barbecue. Cleveland is the city of great barbecue, but I can't eat barbecue any more. There's too much fat and cholesterol. In some ways, things were better, because ignorance was bliss, also. I'm much more cynical about the whole thing. Now we know about cigarettes and all of that. You look at all these old black and white films and everybody's smoking. You listen to the commercials...I've got some old radio shows where they play commercials from the 40's and 50's, and they say that cigarettes are healthy for you. Chesterfield, they're really good for your health. It's pretty shocking.

**Brutarian:** Even they didn't know back then. They thought it just helped you relax.

**Rollins:** Well, they knew before they let anybody else know. Maybe that far back they didn't know it, but they did find out long before they let us know. Those people are still pretty nefarious. What are you going to do? It's a marketplace. That's what this is all about.

**Brutarian:** I read where a neighbor of yours, Todd

Rungren, wrote something saying capitalism is running out of fuel and it's going to collapse.

**Rollins:** I certainly agree with the guy. He'd better be careful. Big Brother is watching. If he keeps saying things like that, you'll find that you're not so popular with people who have to employ you. I agree with him completely, and I'm glad he can say it, but you've got to be careful. There's a really conservative trend coming in now, and people look at things like that as really being subversive.

**Brutarian:** He's been subversive for a year.

**Rollins:** Good. I applaud him. I hope people wake up and realize that we have to do something about what's happening. We can't be led like sheep, which is what's happening. People are eating all of this junk, they don't care what's happening to the rain forests and the environment. They're just going along being bamboozled by the stupid TV. It's really a sad time we're living in. What are you supposed to do? If you say something about it, you're a weirdo, you're a troublemaker. You're supposed to go along. I was tagged as an "uncooperative musician" sometime during the 50's. I had come into prominence, where I had the chance to have my own operation on a well know, commercially viable level through the 50's. I had the reputation as being a person who sort of went my own way in a lot of places. I had a lot of disagreements with

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management, record companies, entrepreneurs and people vowing that that would never have me play on their festivals.

**Brutarian:** Has having your wife manage you made that any easier?

**Rollins:** When Lucille started managing me, I was out of synch with the music business, the entrepreneurs, the record promoters, the record executives, etcetera, etcetera. Having a music career that was more in house was beneficial to me. Lucille is very good at relating with people in the business, something I was not good at. She does that, and I do whatever I have to do with the music, and that's about it. It definitely is a much more comfortable relationship for me.

**Brutarian:** You'd think being in music, people would be used to uncompromising artists.

**Rollins:** That's one thing we have. We have music. We have jazz. That's been one of the great things of our lives. Not just me. It's been a great thing in my life, of course. I mean the whole world society, though. But what good is playing a great note when you've got a guy with a gun shooting you? Music, as great as it is, and as many great musicians are out there, what can they ultimately do about a system that's about money and guns? You can make things good for a few people. That's all you can really hope for. As far as turning back the system, with the guns and power, there's no way of doing it. I've come to terms with that. I realize

that there's only so much you can really do. Making people happy through music is a lot. It's a privilege. I'm certainly aware of that. At one time, I thought 'Boy, when they hear all of these great musicians, it's really going to turn the world.' But it didn't. Coltrane and everybody, all the music we were playing, we were thinking this is really going to set people to thinking right. The forces of greed are too powerful.

**Brutarian:** Could that be what took Coltrane down?

**Rollins:** I don't think he went down. He did his part and he got his reward. But I wouldn't say he went down.

**Brutarian:** He got worn out by the time he died.

**Rollins:** I think he realized he had a short time. Everything he did, I think he did with that in mind. He really crammed a lot into a short period of time.

**Brutarian:** Bright fires burn quickest?

**Rollins:** Yeah. I think he did as much as he was destined to do in that period of time, which was a great deal. I'm not sure he died thinking about whether he would turn the world around. In retrospect, when you've seen the music of him and Louis Armstrong and all the great people that have been around, the world is still basically greedy people with guns and money in control. I've lowered my expectations myself.

**Brutarian:** That really hasn't changed much. There were



guys like Elmo Hope who were great players but never really got their due.

**Rollins:** I think it was even worse in those days. I think a guy like Elmo hope would be probably more appreciated today just by virtue of the fact that he would have more records out there. People would know him. He could go to Europe, he could go to Japan, he could go around the world and play. In those days we were really restricted, unless you wanted to go to Europe and become an expatriate. A lot of Jazz musicians did that. Most guys had to stay here and be at the mercy of acceptance over here, like Elmo. There are a lot of guys who went by the wayside.

**Brutarian:** What happened to Elmo? Why didn't he gain a reputation worthy of his talent?

**Rollins:** This is where it gets complex. Which comes first, the horse or the carriage? Elmo did get involved in drugs, but you can say a lot of guys got involved in drugs because they weren't accepted. They had to live lives in the dark, so to speak. How do you say it? Which came first? In Elmo's case, there's no doubt that a lot of his problems came because he got addicted. A lot of the time he probably could have been out there making a career for himself, he was either incarcerated or involved in getting drugs.

**Brutarian:** You managed to get off of them.

**Rollins:** Yes, I did. Maybe Elmo would have gotten of them too, eventually.

**Brutarian:** If they hadn't killed him first.

**Rollins:** Yeah, I think time probably ran out on him.

**Brutarian:** That has some parallels with Frank Morgan - Frank took thirty years to get unhooked.

**Rollins:** Yeah. I don't know Frank well, but I know Frank. When I first went out to California, Frank was known out there, but I think he already was in trouble. I never got a chance to really know Frank. During that time, he was in and out of the prisons and so forth. There were a lot of guys, Dexter Gordon, for instance, spent time in these institutions but eventually came out and sort of got his life back together. There are a lot of guys who did go in, but got out. Frank really ended up staying in there a long time. I think he spent thirty years, mainly in.

**Brutarian:** He didn't do a lot of playing, except with the warden's band.

**Rollins:** This is a distinction with some guys who did spend some time in jail. There were some people, I don't want to go down the list of names. There were musicians who were unlucky enough to have to spend time in jail who are even out there playing now, who are still around, and some that have passed on, but who went through this and came out. Frank's case is especially



unfortunate, because I think he did spend most of his time in there.

**Brutarian:** He didn't record between 1959 and 1981.

**Rollins:** He didn't record at all. That's a long period. That's really something. He should write a book.

**Brutarian:** He probably will. He's getting tired of talking about it. You probably are too. It's ancient history as far as you're concerned.

**Rollins:** Yeah, but in my case, it's not so bad. Sure, it was a terrible period in my life, but I overcame it. I got off drugs really early. I got off drugs in 1955, the year that Bird died. I made a pledge to Bird that I would get off of drugs, and while I was in Lexington, Bird died, so I never got a chance to show him that I really meant it. But that was a long time ago. When I look back on it, it's not such a terrible thing, it's not such an immediate thing. It's one of the successful things that I've done in my life that I can point to with some pride, actually. I was able to defeat the demon.

**Brutarian:** That's not an easy thing. How was that done? Did they have methadone?

**Rollins:** They had methadone. Methadone had just come onto the scene. There was a place in Lexington, Kentucky, which was the drug rehabilitation center and the drug hospital. I forget what the actual term was. I think it was a federal facility, but also, if you were hooked on drugs, you could go there and voluntarily take the cure,

which was four and a half months. So, this is what I did. At that time, I didn't have any federal convictions against me. I voluntarily went there and took the cure, four and a half months. That's when methadone was first being introduced. That's how it worked in my case. A lot of guys went to Lexington. I think Dexter went to Lexington. A lot of musicians. Probably Red Rodney. A lot of the guys who were using drugs during that period, the bebop period, seemed to end up in Lexington, Sonny Stitt and a lot of people. That's how my situation went.

**Brutarian:** On +3, the album before your recent retrospective, you use two separate bands.

**Rollins:** I wanted to do a trio date, you know +3 is a quartet date altogether. That was the plan. The fact that I used two different groups was really just chance. We didn't finish the recording until sometime later, and the first group wasn't available. Fortunately, they're all guys that I've played with, I have a tremendous amount of respect for them and I feel comfortable playing with them. It had nothing to do with which one I liked better. I liked both groups. It just happened that one group was unavailable for the second part of the session. It could have been one group, but it turned out to be two groups.

**Brutarian:** Was one day longer than the other? You only cut two tracks with one group, and six with the other.



**Rollins:** It was the first time that group had gotten together as a unit. We were trying some material that didn't work. Actually, I probably recorded four or five tunes with one group and six tunes with the other. We had enough that we could choose the best cuts.

**Brutarian:** That sounds like a powerful argument for recording with your road band.

**Rollins:** I'd done that a lot. It is a good idea to do that, just because the guys are tight.

**Brutarian:** Between 1950 and 1952, you recorded seven ten inch records. Now we're lucky if we hear from you once a year. These days you seem a lot more careful about your recording.

**Rollins:** I guess that question has several answers. I have become more of a perfectionist. I've become much more concerned about what I put out. I've become very picky about everything that I do. When I first started out, of course, I didn't think too much about those things. Probably, over the last ten years or so, I've become very concerned with what I put out, and I've become picky about what I do. They really have to drag me into the studio. I'm way behind in the stuff I should be doing. I should really be recording more, according to the company. But, I'm really more concerned with everything being up to par, up to what I want it to be.

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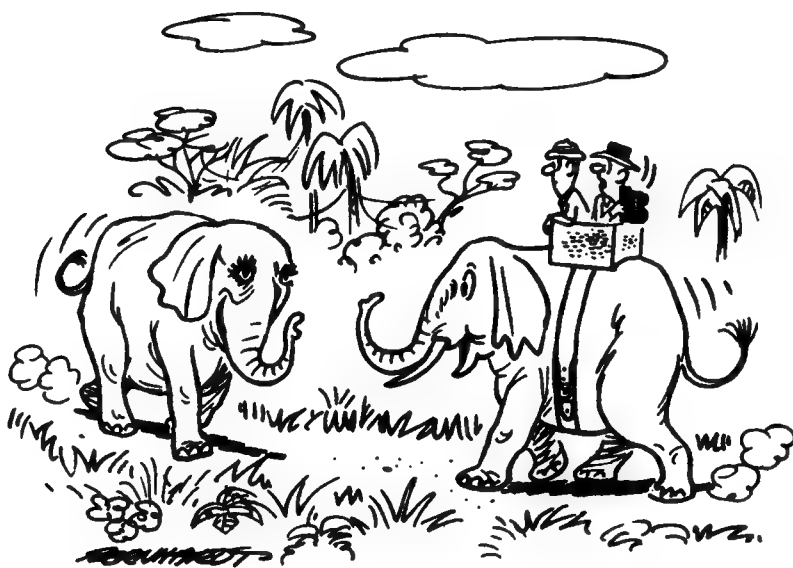


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**Brutarian:** +3 probably swings harder than anything you've recorded in the 90's, but I've always felt that your live albums came across better than studio recordings.

**Rollins:** My live performances, and therefore my live recordings, are probably better. In person, I have the feedback from the audience and the electricity generated by the live audience. That raises my performance a notch in most cases.

**Brutarian:** Do exceptional audiences make for exceptional performances?



*I mean really, Cyril, doesn't  
this old queen ever give up?*

**Rollins:** Generally speaking, I'd say no. It's up to the band and myself to set the tone. If the tone is set, the audience will respond generally in a pretty predictable, favorable way. If it's a good musical excursion, the audience responds. Then there are cases like Italy. I played in Italy a few weeks ago. I hadn't been to Italy in a few years. The audience anticipation was high. It was sort of a so-so performance by the band, but the audience was very anxious to see me and very anticipatory. The reception was more upbeat than it should have been, really. You can't go by that. I have to bring something to the proceedings. I have to set the table. Usually, if I'm happy with the performance, then the audience will also be happy with the performance.

**Brutarian:** Fantasy has been anthologizing you a lot. A few years ago, they put out a box

of your complete Prestige recordings. Just recently, they put out a double disc "Best Of" your more recent recordings on Milestone. A lot of artists don't get this kind of treatment until they die.

**Rollins:** Then I'd better watch out! Maybe my time is shorter than I thought.

**Brutarian:** Did you have any input on the Prestige box?

**Rollins:** It's just complete takes. There was just one instance where there was something added. Orrin Keepnews had called me. He said there was a part of one song on which I had played some kind of solo, ad-lib part before we went into the song. They had deleted that and started the take with the beginning of the song and left out this little ad-lib section that I had done by myself. He listened to it and said it sounded good. He wanted to include it on the original track. I think that's the only thing. Other than that, it's just a compilation of everything I did on Prestige.

**Brutarian:** You've got another box set coming out.

**Rollins:** Yeah, it's going to be a two CD set. Orrin Keepnews wrote some notes on it about when I first came to his company twenty-five years ago. When Orrin asked me to do some albums years ago, I wanted to do a very controversial album at the time called *Freedom Suite*. This is a record I'm sure some record producers would not want to do and would not want to

be involved with. Of course, Orrin did it. He said it was fine by him. We've been colleagues since then. We've been friends a long time.

**Brutarian:** What would you say is one of the biggest changes in jazz since you started playing?

**Rollins:** Do you mean musically or the way jazz is accepted?

**Brutarian:** Both.

**Rollins:** I'll take the easy one first, how jazz has been accepted. I think jazz has been much more accepted, has made some inroads into the population. When I started playing in the 40's, people that dug jazz was really a subculture. It was all small nightclubs, and so on. Since that time, I think there are a lot more people. I think that has something to do with the media exposure, the availability of records, CD's and LP's that came along. Playing festivals and gaining a little more popular acceptance, I think that's the biggest change that I've seen. It's become more popular among the people.

**Brutarian:** At that time there were network radio shows for jazz, where now there's nothing like that.

**Rollins:** There are contradictions. For instance, there was an outlet for that small group of people that liked jazz. There was some radio shows and so forth. But back in the 40's and getting into the 50's, but especially in the late 40's when I started playing professionally, it would be unheard of to have as many jazz festivals drawing as

many people as you have now during the summer months in the States. I mean, there are festivals all over the country, not to mention Europe. Now, there are festivals in Europe practically all year 'round. These are huge money making things, these festivals in Europe. In fact, a lot of musicians really depend on the income from playing festivals in Europe. But even in the states, it doesn't contradict the fact that there isn't a jazz show like Symphony Sid. But remember, Symphony Sid was on very small stations. It was just a select group of people that really listened to him. It wasn't as if Symphony Sid was on WOR in New York every night. It wasn't like that. It was a very small station at the end of the dial. That shouldn't be overblown, either. In general, I think my point is correct. Many more people are aware of jazz, and there's a larger audience for jazz.

**Brutarian:** At any time since the swing era?

**Rollins:** I think the big band era, which my career started right after. My career started sort of at the end of the big bands and the beginning of the bebop era. There were a lot of people then who loved the big bands. Maybe I'm confusing it, too, with the fact that in Europe and Japan there's such a huge market for jazz. Maybe subconsciously, I'm adding that into the equation.

**Brutarian:** We can afford to think globally.

**Rollins:** If we can, then I would definitely say that the big difference between then and now is that there seems to be many more people that



are aware of jazz and at least are willing to attend the big festivals. Of course, that doesn't mean that jazz is really where I think it should be at all.

**Brutarian:** Is it on its way? Will it ever get there?

**Rollins:** That's a tough question. With social conditions in the United States, there are people who feel 'Well, there was such a great big advance made in the 60's and so on.' There are people who feel that the country has regressed. So I don't really know if jazz will ever be really accepted for the valuable music that it really is in the United States. I think it is in Europe and I think it is in Japan, but here in the United States, who knows? Hope lies eternal.

**Brutarian:** What is your take on the neoclassical jazz guys who are basically doing the same thing you were doing thirty years ago, but with less innovation?

**Rollins:** On the surface that might seem to be a retrograde pursuit, but I find that there was so much good music made during the period, I certainly think it is worthwhile for anyone to replay that music. It's just like classical music. If I heard somebody play something by Mendelssohn, I certainly wouldn't say, 'Oh gee, that's terrible.' It's good music. There was a lot of good music made during the 40's, 50's, 60's and so on, so I don't think it's such a terrible thing to revisit this music. It adds to the stature of the music. Jazz was marketed as pop music for about

half a minute, and then the business moved on to the next sound. There was a lot of great stuff that never got a chance to be absorbed and really ingrained as it should have been into the real intellect of the people. For us jazz lovers, sure, but there's a lot of great stuff. I don't think there's anything that bad about repertory playing. This is great music and should be preserved. I think the problem is we look at jazz like it's got to be done every day. Well, that's not great music. Great music is everlasting, like Bach or Beethoven or Mendelssohn, or Schumann or Schubert or these people. You wouldn't have them producing something every decade. That's my whole take on what Wynton is doing.

**Brutarian:** So you think it's just re-energizing music that didn't get a chance to burn all its fuel in the first place?

**Rollins:** Yeah. I think this music should be heard again. Even if it's heard in a setting that might be considered a repertory setting, I think it still deserves to be heard. It deserves a steady hearing.

**Brutarian:** Now, what are the biggest changes in jazz musically?

**Rollins:** Stylistically, it's still a music of different improvisers who have contributed. Back then, in the 50's, it was people like Dizzy and Bird had most of the influence. Miles had some influence. Of course, Monk was influential then, also.

**Brutarian:** They're still influential.

**Rollins:** Yeah. Coltrane became more influential in the 50's. Bud Powell was extremely influential in the 40's and into the 50's. I would say that some styles have changed. I guess you could say there's a difference between bebop and all the things post bop, free music and all this stuff. That's more for you guys to parcel out. Outside of that, I don't think there's been any real change. It's still the music of improvisation. It all stems from that. Different people have different styles.

**Brutarian:** Do you think projects like recording for the Rolling Stones help gain exposure? Musically, it would seem more people heard you via your solo on *Miss You* than on all of your jazz recordings combined.

**Rollins:** I would probably say so. These rock records sell a lot. I guess so. But, they didn't know who I was, so it doesn't mean anything.

**Brutarian:** Did working with The Rolling Stones change your approach?

**Rollins:** No, my approach doesn't change. I only did that record. I never worked with The Rolling Stones. I only did that one recording. It was an experiment on my part. I wanted to see how it would work out. I was working hard to raise the level of my own performance. I'm always working

hard, whenever I play, to make it sound good. It was just another exercise in working. I was working hard, and the music came out as it did. It was certainly nothing that I took lightly. I pride myself on always trying to give the most I could give at any time. I certainly felt that way at that time.

**Brutarian:** Is it an experiment that you'd like to repeat?

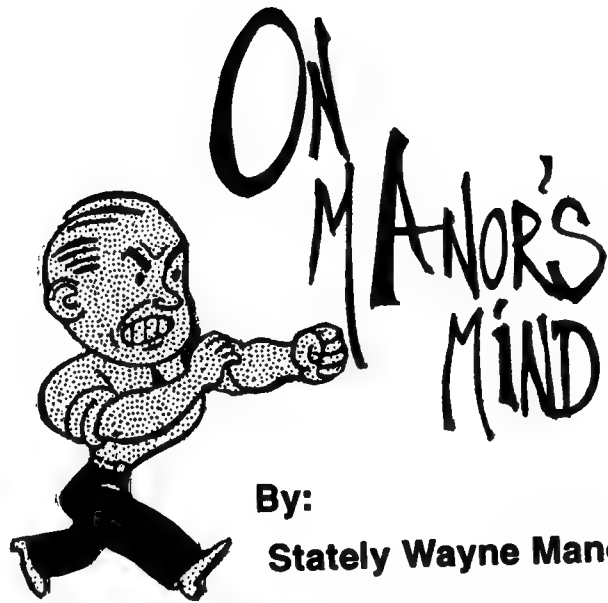
**Rollins:** You know, never say never about anything. I don't know. At the time, I could have gone out on the road with those guys. They had a big tour coming up. I think that record turned out to be a pretty successful record for them. It was a top selling album. I had the opportunity to go out with them as a result of that. But, it was a one time thing for me. It was sort of an experiment. I really didn't want to get involved with that. I'm still trying to play my own music. They wanted me to do a big tour, but it was just a recording thing as far as I was concerned. I didn't want any credit for it. It so happened that the record got acclaim. I thought it was good. I thought I played good for what it was. I wondered how it would sound playing with these guys. It came out okay, but it's not something that I want to do, necessarily. I'm still trying to get Sonny Rollins legacy established.

As the number of liars who claim they were Ramones fans in '77 approaches the percentage of poseurs who circa 1970 said they were at Woodstock, I feel my blood pressure approaching critical mass. Now that it's "fashionable" - a word that is the antithesis of everything the movement stood for (note use of past tense) - *everyone* is solemnly testifying to their long-term devotion to punk rock.

Silly me, I've somehow forgotten battling hordes to get inside Max's Kansas City for a show. Being born on the thirteenth is surely the explanation as to why I was able to shoehorn into monstrous venues featuring such universally acclaimed acts as Regina Richards & The Red Hots, Mink Deville, Dictators, Pure Hell, Voidoids, Plasmatics, Bloodless Pharaohs and Johnny Thunders with the *real* Heartbreakers. It was amazing Cheetah Chrome had the hand strength to even finger a chord at night, what with spending all day signing autographs. And I guess all those pencil-necks who couldn't resist commenting on my appearance were only joking: you see, **EVERYBODY** was into the original punk scene, or so they say today.

About a quarter of a century ago, every youthful musician with a 12-bar blues progression on his set list would ramble at length about how enormously devoted he'd always been to Howling Wolf, Willie Dixon and Robert Johnson. Of course, ninety percent of them were total frauds who didn't know Muddy Waters from Dusty Rhodes; they were simply mouthing the hipster party line. Replace the bluesmen's names with Joe Strummer, Sid and DeeDee (never anyone outside of the official punk elite, e.g. Ross The Boss) and you've got the same pious scam all over again.

Let's break down the numbers. Despite what Ben Stiller and a pretending-to-be-ten-years-younger *NY Press* columnist wish to put over, you can't be both Blank Generation



By:

**Stately Wayne Manor**

AND Gen-X. If you were (or looked) old enough to get admitted to clubs during the punk boom, you're approximately forty now. It's that simple.

Conversely, someone currently in his mid-twenties was likely kindergarten when "God Save the Queen" and "Teenage Lobotomy" were released. Am I supposed to believe he was Blitzkrieg Bopping around the schoolyard? Come on pal, you can't con a can man. At that age you were following the Cookie Monster, not Destroy All Monsters. In '76, *you* were the brat Joey suggested we beat on!

More numbers? In the late Seventies the sales charts were dominated by slick crap like the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack (number one for 24 weeks in '78) and Fleetwood Mac's masterfeces *Rumours* (eventual sales over 17 million). *The Wall* was in the midst of spending five consecutive years on the chart, meaning it sold more copies per week than all of the punk records combined. In the heartlands young people thrilled to the sounds coming out of CB radios, not CBGB's.

Live participation in the punk scene - especially when one considers

most entire states didn't have a single punk club - is as telling as the charts. Even in the punkdom stronghold of NYC with ten million locals to draw from, the median leather 'n' liquor joint head-count was in the hundreds. The scene's flamboyance may have gotten it loads of (usually sensationalized) ink, but the actual number of participants was a minute percentage of the population.

Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Bottom Line: even if there were 25,000 full blown punkers in the U.S. "back in the day" - a figure I consider somewhat generous - that equates to only one out of a thousand people. And suddenly every third interviewee has been a twenty-year devotee? If you indeed "do the math," it doesn't add up. As such, I stick to my guns when fingering the frauds: the stats don't lie, YOU DO.



Punk rock was born out of the blank generations refusal to meekly go along with convention. Like icon Travis Bickle, it didn't believe in morbid self-pity. Things needed to be changed by action, not just by sitting around griping. And that's why the modern mopers make me sick. They're worse than the dreaded hippies: at least the smelly potheads created *something* new



rather than blindly mimicking a style from two decades earlier. Want improvement? Get off your lazy asses and *do* something, Mr. and Mrs. Pierced and Painted. For starters, get your own damn music.

Time for equal time and one of those "What's wrong with this picture?" scenarios. An O.G. gains fame as a rapper, gets in movies and winds up playing . . . cops?!? Isn't that like Anton LaVey as the Pope, Joe Pesci as Barney? ("I love yoots, yoots love me - so shut you friggin' mouth, already.) And what's the deal with reference to "my moms," plural? Isn't that a biological impossibility? Doesn't pluralizing "mom" make as little sense as referring to "myselfes"?

Oh, and did I mention how stupid your kid brother looks? Yeah, the one wearing what I call "the white boy fade," apparently the mandatory haircut for fry jugglers at fast food outlets.

For you palefaces who fail to venture to the funky side of town, a fade is a style popular among black men, the hair being full on top but quickly tapering to extremely close-cropped on the sides. Perennial NBA playoff loser Patrick Ewing wears a moderate fade: check early 90's pics of the gifted Kid from Kid 'N' Play for a radical variation.

Leave it to milkpies to screw the whole thing up in their attempt to look "down." I'm sure you've spotted these creatures. It appears

they went to the local \$5 barber for the usual generic trim, got home, borrowed dad's Remington and had a Parkinson's patient shave a jagged line around the skull. From a distance it looks like they're either wearing a too-small beret or too-large yarmulke. Sacre Vey!

This has got to be the most imbecilic looking male "style" to come along in centuries, if not ever. But don't feel *too* superior, ladies. It's only been about 20 years since half your gender were sporting an atrocious disco "bowl" hairdo, giving you the appearance of a phallus with two arms.

**HUBBA HUBBA HONEY:** Ever since I first saw *National Lampoon's Vacation* I swore the only reason the Psycho shower spoof made the script is because one of the higher-ups wanted to see "Mrs. Griswold" naked. It was an immature, exploitative cheap trick . . . one that should be employed far more often in Hollywood. Hats off to the *NLV* voyeur for the stunt. You see, Mrs. G, was played by blonde dynamo Beverly D'Angelo, this issue's Hubba Hubba Honey.



**Man! You think her penis is as big?**



Bountiful Bev's been in the mopic biz twenty years - making her first big impression as a nude and lewd cannibal in *The Sentinel* with a couple of other newcomers named Walken and Berenger - and why most men don't audibly sigh at the mere mention of her name is beyond my comprehension. Even if she kept her clothes on, Beverly would still be a goddess, what with those large, expressive eyes and that exotic mouth. Yet with the rare exception of *Coal Miner's Daughter*, the versatile actress seems to always be sharing top billing. The world owes her an extensive apology.

Beverly's fascinating away from the screen too. She used to sing in rock bands, is an artist and, to disguise her burning passion for S. W. Manor, once married an authentic Italian Count. (Talk about playing hard to get!) Sweet Thing, you may have been criminally ignored by the public but now you've been publicly adored by this criminal. Welcome to Honeydom.



# Diego Marcial Ríos

by  
**Dominick Salemi**

## The Artist As Hopeful Visionary

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When the critical response to an artist finds the reader wallowing in exegesis stuffed with strained metaphors, multi-syllabic adjectives and references to painters with radically dissimilar styles ; it is, more often than not, a sign that something startlingly original has been loosed upon the world. Listen: "Ríos' art draws from Goya; the inequities of the world filtered through the tradition of Mexican activist art." "His creatures are a mix of Giger and the gun-toting, horseback-riding skeletons of early 20th-century Mexican artist Jose Guadalupe Posada." "One is reminded of Durer, part beast or machine cloaked in medieval battle raiment.

As we are already far too burdened by the anxieties of these influences, we will refrain from delving into the past and instead stick to particulars. Diego Marcial Ríos is a Chicano artist specializing in wood block prints often taking the form of impossibly fantastic man-machines strutting their stuff against backdrops of death, destruction and phantasmagoric violence. Unsettling medieval grotesqueries decorated with highly-personal mythology, frightening images of urban decay and bombastic military hardware. At first blush, the work looks like agitprop; upon closer

examination however, the surface histrionics vanish. The draftsmanship is far too elegant, the mastery of line and tone far too accomplished. Ríos is an artist in control of his demons. He's mastered his nightmares ; tamed his anger. And he does everything by hand, sketching an outline on a board, then carving and inking the image. The print is then fashioned by putting down a sheet of paper and furiously rubbing with a door-knob shaped object called a brayer. In two to four hours, depending on the size of the composition, the piece is complete.

With fifteen or more shows a year, occasionally five running at a time; Mr. Ríos is a man much in demand. He's exhibited throughout the United States and has had notable exhibitions in Ireland and Japan as well. For a short while, he lectured and taught as an artist in residence at the Fresno Art Museum. At the present time, he has a day job at a large San Francisco law firm where he essentially runs things as the case manager. Despite the busy schedule, Diego found the time to talk with us. Why? "I like *Brutarian*. It has an edge that I found intriguing." Go figure.



**Brutarian:** So tell us something about yourself. Begin anywhere you'd like.

**Rios:** My parents were undocumented farm workers when they first came to Fresno. My father (who teaches contemporary literature at California State University, Hayward) taught himself how to read and write - I think it was from comic books. My parents (his mother teaches elementary school) taught all of us the value of learning. When I was the age of four, we lived in Guadalajara, Mexico. My mother and I would have lunch under the Orozco murals at the university, and I knew even then I wanted to be an artist. When I was six, I would draw on everything, even trash bags. At the age of fourteen, I had the same drive to work and passion for art that I do now.

**Brutarian:** And you refined your craft...

**Rios:** First at Berkeley and then at the University of Wisconsin where I received an M.A. and an M.F.A.

**Brutarian:** Your work has often been described as "Chicano art." That seems a bit simplistic. And ridiculous.

**Rios:** The work doesn't speak only for Chicanos, it speaks for everybody. The term is slowly dying. Hopefully the next generation of artists won't have to be labeled by it. It speaks for anyone who is not in control of the big bucks. If you don't have big bucks you don't have control of your life, and that's too bad. This label does define my ethnic



heritage. I am proud of my Mexican and American background. Mexican-Americans or Chicanos have historically been culturally and economically oppressed in the U.S. This is unfortunate. My artwork is not bound to any particular ethnic theme or aesthetic. The art has strong social content that concerns everyone. All people in all countries and societies in our world should learn to communicate... My work reflects what I see and feel in society. The problems are not specific Chicano problems, but universal ones. I have maybe twenty-two shows a year, including Europe and Japan, and I get mail about my work from Japan, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Mexico. Obviously, there is oppression and cruelty everywhere.

**Brutarian:** The critical reaction to your work finds you drawing upon so many artists and so many diverse styles...

**Rios:** There's a lot of influences. Many of them outside the realm of art. I grew up on the picket lines. Before my father went back to school and became a college professor, he was a union organizer for Cesar Chavez. He would take me to demonstrations and pickets in Delano during the 60's. I was a very little boy at the time and I saw the protest. I began to understand that in order to correct injustice, first of all, it must be pointed out. That is really important.

My grandparents were migrant farm workers until they retired and so were my parents, until my dad





sought an education. You know, it's funny; I have three college degrees, an under grad from Berkeley in education and art and , the University of Wisconsin (he holds double masters), and I have the least education in my house, among my parents and five kids. Everyone else has a PHD or MBA.

**Brutarian:** But in terms of artists...

**Rios:** Jose Clemente Orozco, definitely and interestingly enough, or not so interestingly, Suzanne Coe, one of the most prominent women political artists today. When I met her she was very nice. She advised me to never worry about selling my art; to do what I think is right and someone will pick it up and see it for what it is. And, that's exactly what happened.

**Brutarian:** Is there a thread or common theme that runs through what you do?

**Rios:** I'm very vocal about racism; I'm vocal about a lot of things. I became known for it and I wouldn't back off. I was so vicious and angry about it that it began to even bother me. Finally, I realized that our struggle is not just a racist struggle; it's a class struggle. Generally, I'm motivated by what I see and feel everyday. Social and political matters motivate me. Regardless of the social and critical messages in the art, I have tremendous faith in humankind. Evil and corruption must first be pointed out, isolated, and put to an end before peace can be achieved. I know future generations will eventually put an end to class and racism. It will take time, but I have faith in the future of our global community. I have great hope.

**Brutarian:** So your work will someday change, then?

**Rios:** Right now Injustice and oppression is what

concerns me. I may change, but poverty, war and insensitivity bother me. People are tired; they don't like corruption in government, they don't like the glorification of war. This is one of the reasons I am so critical of the foreign policy of the United States. This country simply does not have the right to make war with any other country. War is never right or moral. Our country should never behave the way it does. Using guns and the threat of nuclear destruction. Our foreign policy should be concerned with peace and communication not fostering the image of an international bully.

**Brutarian:** This explains, perhaps, the almost surreal disgust with military technology in your art.

**Rios:** Technology is the outgrowth of man's genius and labor. It can be used either for the detriment or benefit of mankind. Many of our modern scientific advances were made in order to contribute to a war effort. I think that is unfortunate! No war is ever justified. Technology should be used and developed solely to aid everyone. I am always extremely critical of the military in many of my works. I will not stop until all weapons are destroyed and war is completely outlawed internationally! Our world society, the global village, has the means to do this - NOW!

**Brutarian:** But that's a pipe dream, Diego!

**Rios:** To you, maybe. One has to believe.

**Brutarian:** As In "the artist as unacknowledged legislator of the world"?

**Rios:** Perhaps, the themes of life, death, war, corruption and oppression are apparent in all art. I don't believe any particular medium or style communicates any better than another. But I do believe it can make a difference.

**Brutarian:** How would you respond to those who label your work as post-modern?

**Rios:** The art work incorporates both modern and ancient symbols and iconography. No particular time period is recognizable in the artwork. I depict only strong social concerns in my work, such as the dilemma of war, poverty, and oppression. These themes are timeless. And not an improper concern for the artist.

**Brutarian:** So are there solutions for these problems.

**Rios:** We're going to need mass-reform; more money in education, better schools. I think education can be the main tool in escaping poverty. Racism will die, it can't survive. Such attitudes are not profitable. I have great hope for the future, as I've said; but my focus is now. That's important to me. My work is "Right now"! I must point at social injustice and racism, environmental destruction and corruption in both church and state, and I must do it now. There are a number of things which must be addressed, not next year, but now!

**Brutarian:** So much art that has a politically strong content has failed to survive the test of time, does that worry you?

**Rios:** Like Goya, like Picasso and his "Guernica"?

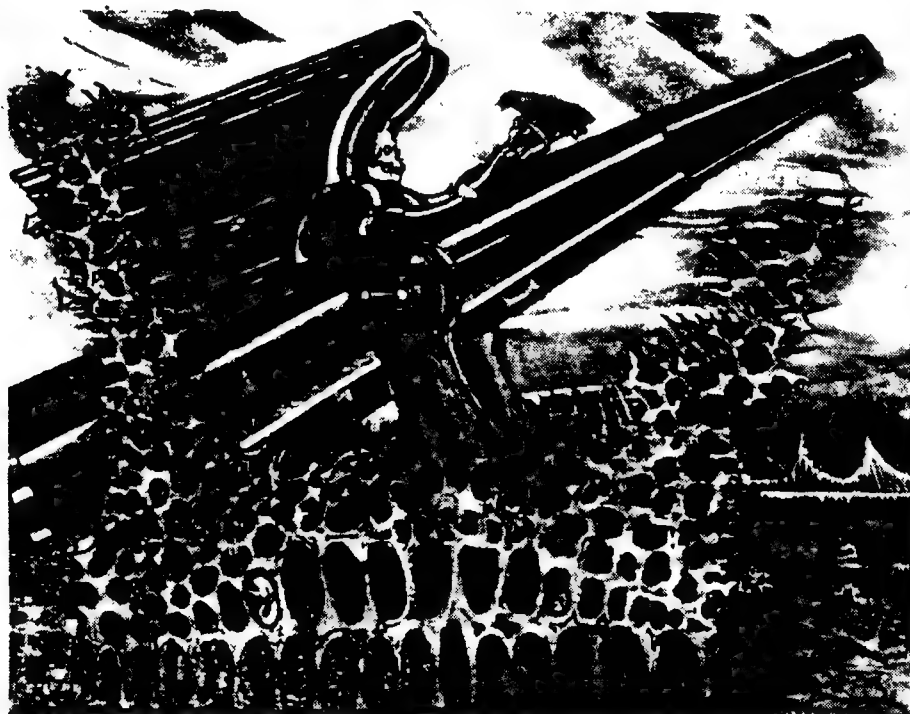
There were other political artists or those who made a political statement who have stayed around for a very, very, very, long time. I think people will always feel very strongly about the statements my art makes. I have to or I wouldn't be doing it.

**Brutarian:** You work with children in your residencies, how do you handle such impressionable young minds? How do you explain the disturbing imagery in your work to them.

**Rios:** Children are a lot more sophisticated than most people think. Don't insult their intelligence. Be serious and clear with them. They're sharp. Many of them are already reading novels like *The Grapes of Wrath*. They're already thinking about nuclear weapons, environmental destruction and things like that.

**Brutarian:** And finally, why woodcuts? Although you do work in other mediums, why are you so drawn to this almost superannuated craft?

**Rios:** The wonderful thing about woodcuts is that you don't have to have a lot of money. Anyone can do them with just a few materials. Unlike painting, where you only have one finished work, I can make prints. That's part of the beauty of it. I can get my statement out, document our times, so generations after us can see all of our mistakes and not make them again.





## PORN PRUDES

by Ariel Hart

**You wouldn't think the adult film industry would be prudish - or could afford to be. But believe me, they are. There's a distinct feeling of "us" and "them" among the brothers and sisters of the jizz biz. This sort of behavior is indeed very odd for a group of people ostracized by polite society. At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin wisely said, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately." But apparently, porno people, don't seem to take this to heart. They should.**

**Here's what I mean. We all make smut. Pure and simple. By nature it's dirty, nasty, filthy, disgusting. "Only if it's done right," director Henri Pachard has been known to say. All of us, couples chick Candida Royalle, gang-bang king John Bowen, MTV-style sex director Michael Ninn, John "Buttman" Stagliano and "Vivid Video's" ever vanilla Paul Thomas are pornographers. They would probably cringe if caught together in the same sentence, but it's true.**

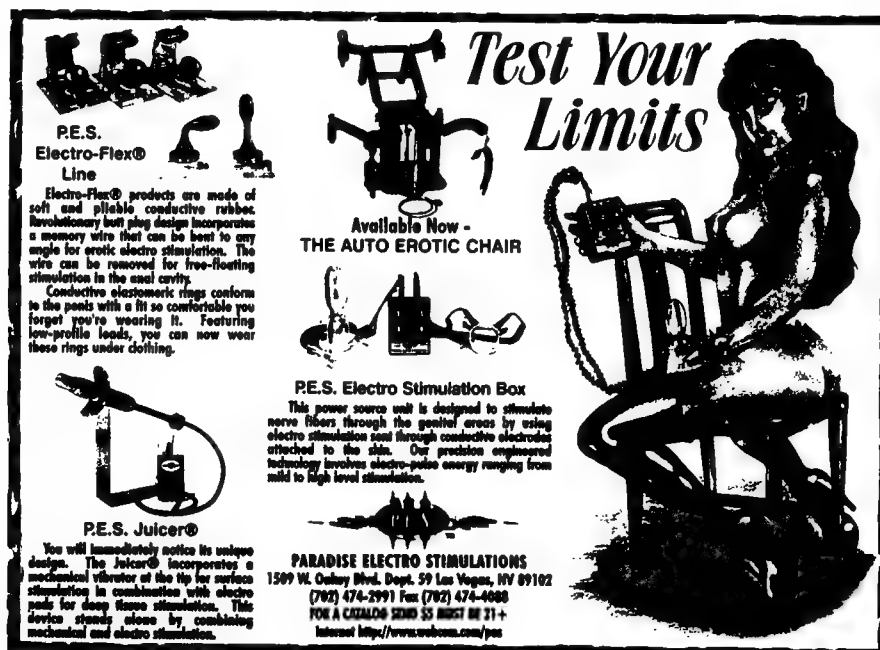
**We all, myself included, make our livings making films about fucking and sucking. Only, some in the blue movie circuit seem to possess an odd elitist, uppity attitude. "I don't do hard core or gay or bi or fetish or gang-bang films. I make erotica. Art."**



**Bullshit. In the eyes of the real world, it's all trash.**

**To paraphrase Gloria Steinem, "Erotica is what turns me on. Pornography is what turns you on." And in the opinion of Fundamentalists and other First Amendment enemies, we're all one and the same. We're all going straight to Hell in the same boat, so to speak. And without a paddle. Amen.**

**It never ceases to amaze me why pornographers insist on remaining so separate, why we treat each other like mortal villains when we are really comrades in carnality. Think about it. Whether we use gynecological close-ups or soft-focus shots, whether we hire an army of orgyists or real-life lovers, whether we use condom-clad cocks or unprotected double-anals, whether we show cum-facials or romantic embraces: we're all porn scum. In our movies, consenting adults are paid good solid U.S. currency to have sex with each other. That's the bottom line. If they don't they're not hired. Case closed.**



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Electro-Flex® products are made of soft and pliable conductive rubber. Revolutionary butt plug design incorporates a memory wire that can be bent to any angle for erotic electro stimulation. The wire can be removed for free-floating stimulation in the anal cavity. Conductive elastomeric rings conform to the penis with a fit so comfortable you forget you're wearing it. Featuring low-profile leads, you can now wear these rings under clothing.

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**So, we're pornographers. In some loose sense of the word, we're all pornographers. Myself included.**

**This fact alone should bind us, but it doesn't. We each appeal to different audiences, to different sectors of the libido. There's plenty of room for all sorts of perversions on the adult entertainment horizon. Like plumbers, electricians or firemen, we're part of the same phenomenon, the same fraternity, the same union. But alas, there is no brotherhood, no union. And instead of peacefully coexisting, we fight amongst ourselves, all this while the rest of the world fights us.**

**But out of these possible ashes, rises a sordid phoenix of triumph. The adult industry, under threat of extinction, has finally joined forces and banded together. "It's the first time I ever remember this happening," admits Canes, referring to the 100 or so adult businesses citywide which have united to battle the issue before a State court judge. After arguing issues all day in court on September 18th, Judge Marilyn Diamond must decide whether the new zoning laws will go into effect as of November 1st or whether they are unconstitutional. "It's very troublesome," admits the X-rated community's attorney Harold Price Fahringer.**

**Still, adult industry backbiting and anomie remains at an all-time high. Consider the saga of "Leisure Time Entertainment's" Mark Carriere, long considered a scumbag by the biz for his cheating and dishonest tactics. And that was long before his "100 videos in 100 days" fiasco. Sure, he managed to complete his quest with the help of a host of erotic performers and dedicated crew members, but Carrier neglected to pay anyone for their work. Well, it turns out that in 1994, Carriere spoke to both the F.B.I. and the Justice Department (as if one weren't enough) to give incriminating evidence against Star Distributors and Bizarre Video.**

**We're talking fetish films here, folks - spanking, cross-dressing, etc. not hardcore sex movies. But Carriere was stupid enough to mail-order some of Bizarre's S/M titles to Tallahassee, Florida, smack dab in a verboten zone which none but the greedy service. A number of states, including Oklahoma, Utah, Kentucky, Arkansas and yes, Florida, have strict anti-pornography laws. Everyone but the unscrupulous and the moronic refuse to ship there. When Carriere was caught, he adopted a whining "they made me do it" play and spilled his guts before a grand jury, implicating his peers. But it was his own idiocy which brought him there in the first place. Now he's desperately grasping at straws in other people's glasses to get out.**

**Amazingly, Carriere pled guilty, forked over a hefty fine of \$3 million (hey, what does the government do with all these dirty, filthy porno pennies anyway) and received two years probation. No jail sentence like VCA's Russ Hampshire, who valiantly served years in the slammer, but kept his mouth closed. On top of that, Ted Rothstein, former owner of Star Distributors, claims Carriere made up lies about Rothstein and Bizarre just to keep from going to jail. Others have given sworn statements attesting to this. Why did Carriere turn stoolie? Rothstein's attorney, Paul Cambria says, "You can call a pigeon a swan, but everyone knows in the end that he's just a pigeon." Screw Magazine's Al Goldstein gives a gentler assessment of the situation, "The real villain here is not Mark Carriere and certainly not Teddy Rothstein. It's the bullshit lawmakers who make evil, cretinous laws. Carriere is just a jerk who got his nuts caught in the wringer that passes for justice in this country. He's trying to drag Rothstein down with him. And it looks like the whole of the adult-entertainment industry is going to stand by and watch it happen. I refuse to be a party to it."**

**And neither would Ben "Hang Together" Franklin. After all, he's the same guy who said, "The best part of a woman is the last to decay." I think Ol' Ben would have enjoyed a good porno now and then. And defended his right to do so.**

**As in New York City where something ugly is going down in New York City's Times Square. A region once famous, even immortalized, for its own distinctly beautiful brand of seediness is being cleaned up beyond recognition. When you used to visit 42nd Street and 8th Avenue, you expected, even demanded tawdriness. It was a God-given, Constitutional right. I mean, you wanted to get lost in blinking rivers of neon. You craved rows and rows of peep shows as far as the eyes could see. You loved those crummy theaters with creaky, stained seats and floors like flypaper whose tired marquees silently hawked movies like, "Hot and Saucy Pizza Girls" or "Lickety Pink." You smiled warmly at photo displays with nipples blacked out with bits of frayed electrical tape. It was lust, pure and simple, in black and white and living color. This was the very essence of Times Square. Sure, it was disgusting and depraved. But you liked it that way. It was part of the charm.**

**But then Disney came to town. Yes, Mickey Mouse and Co. got their grubby little white-gloved paws on 42nd Street and proceeded to politely choke the life out of it. Spearheaded by Gretchen Dykstra, president of the Times Square Beautification Project, sex businesses were relocated throughout the city. Since this shift was touted as "redevelopment" (vendors were paid to move rather than evicted), it went quickly and smoothly - and couldn't be stalemated under First Amendment rights issues. Smartly dubbed as "redevelopment," freedom of speech didn't even come into the picture.**

**Now the "Deuce" is barely recognizable, like a once cherished sex kitten who has undergone extensive plastic surgery. There is a squeaky clean sports/restaurant "theme park" nearby. There is a bouncy beer garden overlooking the Newsday building and a glitzy cannoli cafe across the street from that. Watching over all, like a sacred, scary sentinel is Disney's refurbished New Victory Theater. The boarded up, gated, abandoned hulls of former porn shops are all that remains of the Great White Ways' former fetid glory.**

**But it gets even uglier than this. A new zoning law looms on the periphery which would further obliterate adult establishments within city limits. This time, it's wisely disguised as protecting "real estate values." Once again, dollars and cents might prevail over the rights of small businessmen. Operating on the shaky premise that shops which sell sexual-oriented wares lower property values because they promote crime (which has never, ever been proven, by the way), flesh emporiums as we know and love them might be a thing of the past in New York City come November 1st.**

**"They're telling me that, if this zoning law is passed, a 60 percent of my stock must be 'non-adult' in order for me to stay open," says Richard Kunis, owner of Manhattan Video, which is smushed unobtrusively in the City's fashion district on 39th Street. He continues, "They're saying that I have to stock violent mainstream movies or they'll close me down. I personally find that offensive."**



# Audio Depravation



**craig regala [cr]**  
**dirk fubar [df] dom salemi [ds]**  
**steve jeffries [sj]**



## **Alice In Chains - Unplugged**

The best are full of passionate intensity and the worst sail along on earnest indifference. Grunge rock for the melodically challenged. And semi-literate. Almost enjoyable since fervently intentioned. Histrionics and fatuous anger for the dulled, listless crowds. Those thirsting for meaning, for transcendence, are advised to look elsewhere. Anywhere. (Columbia) ds

## **Bad Brains - Black Dots**

Personally, I've always gotten a bigger kick out of The Bunny Brains than the Bad Brains, but this? This is good! "Redbone in the City" a Pistols' inspired romp replete with Rotten tongue rolls and cacodemonic laughs could easily pass for a lost cut on *Bollocks*. Cut to "You're A Migraine": punk with chunky rhythms and wild, senseless garagesque guitar solos. Proceed to

"Black Dots": The birth of hardcore? Maybe. Sure, why not? Kind of jazzy too. As is "Pay To Cum" the Brains' first release on 45. "Banned In DC" sounds like Iggy on a bender. With an effortless sonic blast of psychedelized string bending. "Why'd You Have To Go" and "The Man Won't Annoy Ya" is the reggae punk we should have been fed instead of that watered-down crap served up by Sting and his Police. Essentially, the band's set list circa 1979 recorded in one mind-melting blast in a DC studio. Oh yes, they were black. I'm white. So? Fabulousness has nothing to do with color. Color is a musical term. (Caroline) ds

## **Les Baxter - Que Mango!**

Jet-setting . . . A way of life. Of sorts. Suave, soigne and delectable. New sights, sounds, tastes and colors. The elan vital.

Jump into your forest green Testarossa and motor off to Dulles International. Fly on into the sun and to the beautiful people with a "Flight In The Andes." Grab a tin of Beluga and a chilled Stolichna for a "Morning On The Meadow." With a hangover now inevitable, stumble onto a DC-8 for an "Affair In Arruba." . . . On the landing tarp it's a maudlin au revoir to "Felician My Love" and then off to a "Night In Buenos Aires." Shrug off the nausea and agonizing headache and pony to the enticing beat of "Soolaimono" as you and your fellow globe-trotting bon vivants enjoy the pleasures of a "Tropicando Night." Wake up with a pink scrunchie knotted tightly around the base of your penis and a dead Baijan whore in your Jacuzzi. (Scamp) sj & ds

**Bedhead - Bedheaded**

If poetry is, as T. S. Eliot once observed, emotion recollected in tranquility then Bedhead's music is poetry: frenzy in a sea of calm exposing the crude sophistries of love, its suffocating spasms, its instinctive caresses, its natural postures. The communication of deliciously vague confidences in a whisper in the twilight. Lightly strummed chords efflorescing to subtly stalking melodic lines the rhythms of which tease us beyond all endurance. Permeating the rapturous dolor is Monsieur Bedhead summoning the most frugal tropes in a futile attempt to control and repress the effervescent salts of ideas and feelings. Lovely, lovely and lovelier still. (Trance Syndicate) ds

**Billy Bragg - William Bloke**

Is it necessary to criticise a mediocre talent? Oh let's. Little Billy started out to "make as much noise as the Clash with just me and my guitar." Dear, oh dear, an English socialist with scruffy Brit-class-revolution dreams evolved from the punk-d.i.y-everybody-into-the-pool aesthetic w/o any of that "messy" rock folderol. This persona was ditched pretty quickly and without the history lesson. Today, after years of neglect, this seminal nothing has evolved into a . . . hmmm . . . amelodic commie Dan Fogleberg. Or is that a tuneless socialist Bruce

Cockburn? Anyway, even if the tunes were any good, Billy's irritating habit of injecting his political beliefs in clunky, obvious, rah-rah ways (which seem to draw on nothing other than ideology) would render them unlistenable. No subtlety, no metaphoric resonance (Jesus, has this guy never heard of Bob Marley, John Lennon, blues, Woody Guthrie, Dylan, et al.?), no tact, no real insight, no humility, no wit. I suppose these are bourgeois values which Bragg views as superficial and divisive. Not a real note struck the whole way through.

Listen, if you have to drag your sorry ass down a wordy Brit-pop lane buy a couple of Elvis Costello records. Better yet a Pogues' lp. Or you could go for something really impressive in the way of songcraft and swing for the first six Robyn Hitchcock records. Of course the latter's gravity may be far too heavy for those still inclined to lend Monsieur Bragg an ear. (Elektra) cr

**Sonny Burgess - Still Got It**

Some guys get old and learn a few things. Fifties Burgess: frantic, scat-thin, sometimes irritating hillbilly bop . . . Burgess today: ragged but right, lyrics suffused with hard-won wisdom and yes, genuinely lascivious. The music? The bop bops, the ballads tug at the heart strings, and the rock rolls. Time's winged chariot is

dogging this aging hillbilly boy but Sonny ain't worried. The pure products of America go crazy. Some of them live to tell about it. And manage to make the ride sound like loads of fun. (Upstart) ds

**R. L. Burnside - A Ass Pocket Of Whiskey**

A blues disc for people who want to learn about it real quick. None of that slow moaning passing for troubles seen. None of that tasteful slide work parading as roots. Instead you get dirty, nasty, mean-spirited, drunken, but bucket, muddy BLACK MUSIC! It rocks and stomps and hoots and hollers. Even in slower tempos. The real deal fashioned and sung by a whisky damaged hoary Afro-American who can't be bothered with niceties like enunciation, tempo or key. No! R.L. just lets it rip and lets whateve it is he's playing take him wherever it is he wants to go. And if white boys like Jon Spencer want to throw in some psychedelic reverberations or damaged harp fills along the way well that's just fine. Fine, fine, fine. Like pruno aged in sunshine. Or shoe polish strained through five pieces of white bread till it tastes like hoe cakes dipped in wine. Yeah! I say, YEAH! (Matador) ds

**The Candy Snatchers - The Candy Snatchers**  
We respect the lead singer's attempt to give this inexplicably fashionable generic punk-core outfit a little pop by viciously



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## SHOCKING BLUE CINEMA!

## VINTAGE 1970's XXX CINEMA

**ACTS OF CONFESSION '72.** Kim Durey. Cyndee Summers. Nun taking final vows tormented by recurring dreams in which she has sex with nuns, priests & friars. Historically accurate Renaissance artwork with beautiful production values. 1st time on video! D: Anthony Spinelli

**AFFAIRS OF JANICE '76.** Annie Sprinkle. C.J. Laing. Zebedy Colt. Husband insane with jealous plots double murder executed by spraying victims with silver paint & suspending them from ceiling. Annie does her specialty! D: Zebedy Colt



**ANAL ULTRA VIXENS 1970-79** Linda McDowell (pastor), Vanessa Del Rio, Lisa Deleese, John Holmes. Busty starlets in some not all anal and loop collection. Disco soundtrack.



**ANNA OBSESSED '77.** John Leslie. Annette Haven. Constance Money. Leather clad stalker violates women at gunpoint in powerfully erotic thriller. Uncut.

**BARONESS NICA '75.** Cruel, foul-mouthed dominatrix scars up lowly slave with severe whipping. Ultra perverse New York sleeze.

**BIZARRE STYLES '81.** Annie Sprinkle. Vanessa Del Rio. Fashion show becomes carnival of painful perversion. Uncut Avon Production!

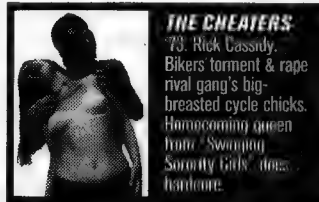
**CALL ME ANGEL SIR! '76.** Annie Sprinkle. Depraved Aunt seduces and abuses orphan girl. You will see Annie fuck a dwarf!



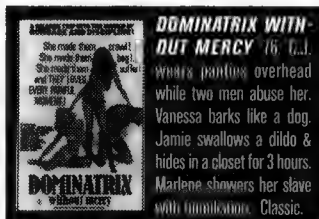
**THE CHATEAU '73.** Sandy Carey. German slavers capture and brutalize beautiful woman. Includes Bonus S/M footage.

**CANDY STRIPERS '78.** Chris Cassidy. Amber Hunt. SCREWS' best film of the year 1978. HUSTLER'S Highest Rating! Best copy ever made available! From a mint UN-cut 16mm print!

**CHINA DESADE '77.** Linda Wong. Mercenary infiltrates den of crazed sadist to free Chinese girl from fiend's web of whores and horror. An overdose of sex & violence.



**CUMMING ATTRACTIONS V.2.** 85m. Tattooed Ladies, Illusions of A Lady, Blue Heat, Fetishes of Monique, Forbidden Ways, Badge 69, Insatiable, Porno Mondo, Tijuana Blue, Million Dollar Mona (Candy Samples), Mindblowers & 26 more 1st time on video XXX trailers.



**DOUBLE FEATURE #1 FLOSSIE A VENUS OF 15 '73.** Variation on Lolita theme based on a story by Algenon Swinburn. **FANNY HILL '73.** Story of 15 yr. old orphan ending up in English house of ill repute. Based on the story by John Cleland.

**DIVERSIONS '76.** Beautiful women on lonely train ride imagines sex with a vampire, rape by soldiers, bloody knife murder & much more!... Ultra Rarity from England.



**ECSTASY IN BLUE '78.** Annie Sprinkle. C.J. Laing. Terri Hall. Hypnotic cult of women worship satanic guru's 10.5 inches & perform acts of degradation.

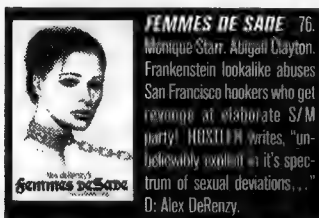
**EUROSLEAZE** circa '75. Extremely rare loops from Germany—beautiful women, high production values & vivid color! Includes scenes edited from the U.S. release of SENSATIONAL JANINE.

**FIRE DOWN BELOW '74.** a.k.a. PERVERTED PASSION. Frank, a boozed up degenerate, cruises Hollywood searching for women to ogle, rape and murder. D: Cindy Lou Sutters (Ray Dennis Stackler).

**FORBIDDEN SEXUALITY 1970-75.** Documents Necrophilia, Barbaric Rape & Abduction, Hooked Amputee, G/S, F/F, Electrocution, Nuns, & more! WARNING: Attacks your senses with brutal, shocking imagery!



**HISTORY OF RAPE-V.2.** circa '75. Documents rape in XXX cinema. WARNING! This film reaches the absolute limits in sexual brutality! Jamie Gillis goes insane with a butcher knife; Nazi's savagely tear into their female prey—and that's just the tip of the iceberg!



**INVASION OF THE LOVE DRONES '79.** Bree Anthony. Interstellar hornies known as the "Ora Gasm" invade earth with zombie love slaves! Uncut XXX version.

**LITTLE ORPHAN DUSTY '76.** Rhonda Jo Petty. John Holmes. Rapist bikers take lost runaway deep into the woods. Uncut.

**MONA THE VIRGIN NYMPH '70 B/W.** Fifi Watson. Bride to be refuses intercourse but loves giving head to fiancé & strangers. 1st XXX to gain widespread distribution. P: Bill Osco. D: Howard Ziehm. Best copy available anywhere.

**MORE WAYS THAN ONE '73.** Linda Loveall. Carla loves it up the rear. She keeps a dum dum on hand who goes to her ass like a dog to Alpo. Linda Loveall is one dynamite chick! A Backdoor Production.



**NIGHT CALLER '75.** Monique Starr. Phone freak plays "mommy games" with hookers and tortments lonely women. Grim, atmospheric sickie.

**ORIENTAL BLUE '75.** C.J. Laing. Bree Anthony. Jamie Gillis. Madame Blue, a procurer of female flesh, feuds with her ace pimp who refuses to release lovely young slave girl. Filmed in NYC's Chinatown.

**ORIENTAL TECHNIQUES OF PAIN & PLEASURE** circa '80. Annie Sprinkle. Mistress Candice. Hostage females witness a thousand abominable atrocities! An uncut Avon production.

**PARTNERSHIP '73.** Rene Bond. Rick Cassidy. Con artist takes buddy for ride in business scam. Features slender blonde in snakeskin panties & red leather boots! Includes Rene Bond in softcore version of KIM COMES HOME.



**PRIVATE, PRIVATE '73.** Rene Bond. Rick Lutz. Private eye cracks lame jokes while outwitting incompetent bankrobbers. Rene makes it with a lovely Chinese Doll!

**RAPE VICTIMS '75.** Vanessa Del Rio. Bonnie suffers terrifying rape then visits clinic where victims unburden themselves of guilt feelings.

**REVENGE & PUNISHMENT '76.** Tara Chung. Angry woman goes after sleazy senator who killed her sister. Brutal S/M, gynecological exams, nasty nurses... Gritty, New York trash! D: Joe Davian.

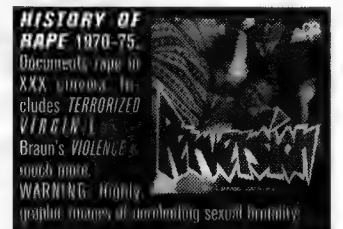


**SEDUCTION OF LYN CARTER '74.** Andrea True. Jamie Gillis. Married woman repeatedly defiled by demented sex researcher. Andrea's best. D: Anthony Spinelli.

**SEX PROPHET '73.** Rick Cassidy. Cyndee Summers. Nina Fause. Phony guru persuades women to suck him off with ramblings about the "poetry of life". Includes catchy original tune titled "Follow the Windsong".

**SEX RINK '76.** Teenage girls throw senior bash at local roller rink. Tight satin shorts, tube sox, super skates & glitter highlight this cum soaked gem! D: Cindy Lou Sutters (Ray Dennis Steckler).

**SUBURBAN SATANIST '74.** John Holmes. Barney, a weekend satanist, shrieks with evil laughter, spouts Lucifer mumbo jumbo to his horny flock & screws big-breasted Rosemary. Hall Bababusi! Includes bonus shorts LUCIFER'S LUST & THE SATANIST.





**SATAN WAS A LADY** '75. Anne Sprinkle. Blue. Anthony Ivan Hall. Young Anne's caution: caution, juicy enticement.

**TALES OF THE BIZARRE** circa '80. Cheri Champagne. Slumber party girls tell stories of extreme degradation. Uncut Avon Production!

**TAMING OF REBECCA** circa '80. Sharon Mitchell. Rebecca escapes father's torment at school for wayward youth. Little does she know her nightmare has just begun! Uncut Avon Production.

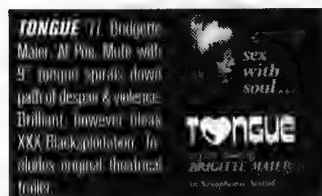
**TEENAGE DESSERT** '76. High School drop-out cruises Venice beach on roller skates, searching for sexy adventures. D: Cindy Lou Sutters (Ray Dennis Steckler)



**SUPERKNOCKERS** '89-79. Candy Samples. Loop collection highlights HUGE breasted models and more talking NO-EEE & bigger! Includes BIG TIT PIRATE, MRS. BIG TITS, BIG DOLLY, HUGE DITS, BULL RIDER & more!

**TERRI'S REVENGE** '76. Terri Hall. Radical New York women start W.A.R. (Women Against Rape) then take vengeance on male abusers. Rabid revenge flick by Zebedy Colt.

**THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS** '76. Catherine Burgess, Jamie Gillis, Terri Hall. Beautiful blonde escapes boring aristocratic lifestyle when a demon takes her to an insane sexual hell.



**TONGUE** '77. Bridgette. Main: Al Po. Main: with 4" tongue spirals down path of despair & violence. Brilliant, however bleak XXX Blackploitation. In color original theatrical trailer.

**TIJUANA BLUE** '73. Two burns on drug run become immersed in squalid pit of sexual depravity. Features ultra trashy & busty Mexican whores. D: Harry Hopper (Howard Ziehm).

**TONGA-GOD OF LOVE & LUST** '72. Surburban pagans worship tiki statue. With wild drumming muzak.

**A WOMAN'S TORMENT** '77. Tara Chung. Marlene Willoughby. Mentally sick female plunges head first into hallucinogenic mayhem! Bloody ax & knife killings, lesbian strangulation, body under the porch. D: Roberta Findlay.

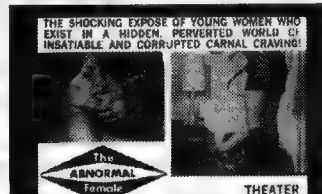
**WHITE SLAVERS** '74. Nasty dominatrix shows off huge breasts & masturbates with Mexican bullwhip. Includes bonus shorts THE KIDNAP & THE RANSOM.

## 1960s & 70s SOFTCORE



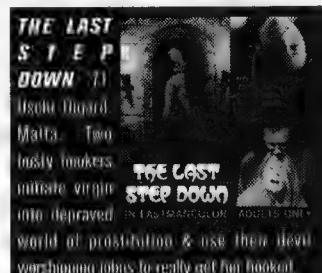
**AUTUMN BORN** '79. Dorothy Stratten. Young beauty abducted and sent to exclusive school of discipline. Ultra rare Canadian exploitation.

**BAD, BAD GANG** '71. Rene Bond, Rick Lutz. Weekend of sun & fun comes to grinding halt when filthy bikers kidnap two couples. Includes bonus feature JOURNAL OF LOVE (soft version) with Rene Bond.



**ABNORMAL FEMALE** '69. B/W. Pamela Berkeley, Jeanette Foster. A Distincta release.

**EVERYBODY GOES APE** '70. Marsha Jordan. Marsha & big-breasted girlfriend go wild when office coffee pot is spiked with sex powder!



**THE LAST STEP DOWN** '71. Uschi Digard. Malta. Two lusty hookers initiate virgin into depraved world of prostitution & use their devil worshipping jobs to really get her hooked.

**THE MAGIC MIRROR** '70. Uschi Digard. Maria Arnold. Uschi buys lust inducing magical mirror. She screws a tv. repairman, a cop, a robber and frolics with feminists from the Anti Smut Society. Incredible!



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**MARINA** '70. Athena Prezaki. Lisa Vern. Older experienced couple seduce teenage brother and sister. Marina is a very busty brunette. American Film Distributing Corporation release.



**EXECUTIVE WIVES** '70. Capri. Lisa Brant. Personnel manager throws wild parties & screws the wives of guys up for promotion. Features: GRETA—a busty platinum blonde go-go dancer. Stunning color!

**MILLION DOLLAR MONA** '72. Candy Samples. Sandy Dempsey. Wealthy socialite interviewed by hot young reporter...in depth! Contains brief hardcore scenes.



**FUEGO** '69. Voluptuous Isabel Sari lusts for sex & suicide! "A surefire cult item (it's a favorite of John Waters)." - Michael Weldon D: Armando Bu (Argentina's Russ Meyer)

**SADDLE TRAMP WOMEN** '72. John Alderman. Rene Bond. Sandy Dempsey. Candy Samples. Bounty hunters go after rapist outlaws. Rene, Sandy & Candy all play hookers! 1st time on video! D: Godfrey Daniels.



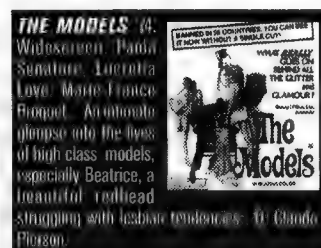
**ANASIDIKA** '69. Uta. Trickster. Lone man is punished for being rapist/killer by tribe of Ancient Greek lesbians. D: Michael & Roberta Findlay. Best copy available anywhere!

**SEX & THE SINGLE VAMPIRE** '70. John Holmes. Sandy Dempsey. Swingers visit house of Count Dracula. Hilarious!



**SEX-O-PHRENIA** '70. Rene Bond. Lonely housewife in need of sex has bizarre hallucinations causing her to seek out random sex acts.

**SHOT ON LOCATION** '72. Rene Bond. Sandy Dempsey. Rick Lutz. Cast & crew on location shoot screw like crazy. Sexy Sandy is 14yr. old hillbilly girl!



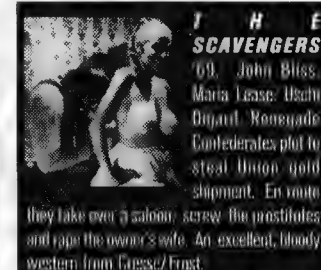
**THE MODELS** '69. Wide-screen. Pamela Senatore. Lucinda Love. Marie France Floquet. An intimate glimpse into the lives of high class models, especially Beatrice, a beautiful redhead struggling with lesbian tendencies. D: Claude Pinzon.

**SKIN FLICK MADNESS** '71. Sandy Dempsey. Uschi Digard. Harold brings girlfriend to local grindhouse to watch skin flicks! At first she's timid, but then she's so turned on they do it right in the theater!



**PANORAMA BLUE** '74. Rene Bond, Uschi Digard, Sandy Dempsey, Cyndee Summers, Rick Cassidy, John Holmes. PANORAMA BLUE is a 70mm, 4 track stereophonic, color extravaganza! It's the first "X" rated, hard ticket, road show attraction. D: Alan Roberts.

**STRANGE VENGEANCE OF ROSALIE** '72. Bonnie Bedelia. Ken Howard. Anthony Zerbe. Ignorant teenage girl lures traveling salesman to her desert shack for an education in twisted sex. Zerbe is a suzy biker who torments them both.



**THE SCAVENGERS** '69. John Bliss. Maria Leese. Uschi Digard. Renegade Confederates plot to steal Union gold shipment. En route they take over a saloon, screw the prostitutes, and rape the owner's wife. An excellent, bloody western from Gessie/Frost.

**CONFESSIONS OF A YOUNG AMERICAN HOUSEWIFE** 1974. 83m. Jennifer Welles. Chris Jordan. Rebecca Brooke. Repressed mother visits sexually liberated daughter living "couples" lifestyle. D: Joe Sarno.

**DOMINATORS-V.2.** 1970-79. 92m. Rene Bond. Beautiful women in high heels, colorful garters & panties dominate their lowly female & male slaves. Rare loops include: THE AUCTION, CORDS OF PLEASURE, TAMING OF KURT, 1st DAY AT SCHOOL SURPRISE. A very cruel Rene torments her lovely young slave girl in IT TOOK A THIEF.

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QUALITY!



blading himself prior to each and every live show. He even managed to summon a copious deluge of the crimson stuff from his forehead for his picture on the CD cover. But hey, we bleed for our art too! There was the time Steve nearly had his pinky chewed off trying to feed a strychnine-laced olive to Dom's vile, malodorous mutt whilst Dom was writing an ode to the Stinky Toys. Dom, not wishing to be outdone, and mortified with embarrassment, grabbed an exacto knife and stabbed himself repeatedly in the gums. The dog, Stinky Toys and the olive were forgotten. Steve and Dom still bear the scars. (Safehouse) sj & ds

#### **Karen Carpenter - Karen Carpenter**

The never before released Karen Carpenter solo sessions! With an all-star roster of middlebrow LA musicians! Golly gosh-a-roonie! All aboard The Love Bloat! Which the first mawkish cut, "Lovelines" sounds like an out take from. The second, an earnest folk-tinged bit 'honey has Karen warbling as if in the throes of guilt after having ingested a little too much chocolate mousse. "If I Had" finds the lithe ex-Ms. Carpenter fingering herself to Hallmark-Card sentiments and a sacharine Bob James seventies-disco big band arrangement. Our fave, however, is "Making Love In The Afternoon," a lovely fustian which takes the "nasty" out of sex and replaces it with "smooth"!

All in all, a morbid but fascinating portrait of an artiste without a soul. Irrefutable prrof that life exists, in rough form, on other planets. (A&M) ds

#### **Chixdiggitt! - Chixdiggitt!**

Canada gave the world hockey, the greatest sport known to humans, but it like isn't known as fertile turf for rock 'n' roll, eh? Sure, it like produced Neil Young, The Band, and a few others, but, like as a general proposition, Canada can't rock worth a shit, eh? But then again, you don't really like think Wayne Gretzky could have come from Texas, do you, eh?

Chixdiggitt! isn't like original, but their endearingly bratty debut is like better than anything The Ramones have cranked out since *Animal Boy*, and like a whole lot more fun than Green Day, eh? They like mix the dense wall of chords of mid-80's Ramones with Dictators' knucklehead attitude, eh? Their song titles are like even borderline inspirational - samples include "Henry Rollins Is No Fun," "I Wanna Hump You" and "Toilet Seat's Coming Down." Like the best of the lot is "I Feel Like (Gerry) Cheevers (Stitch Marks on My Heart)," wherein leader K.J. Jansen compares his broken heart with scars that were drawn on the mask worn by the legendary former Boston Bruins netminder, eh? It like ain't anything that you haven't heard done better before, but so what,

eh? Like, get me another Brador, eh? (Sub Pop) df

#### **Chrome Cranks - Love In Exile**

#### **The Oblivians - Popular Favorites**

#### **Jon Spencer Blues**

#### **Explosion - Now I Got Worry**

A movement 'tis now. "Blues damage" tis called. The sounds of the Mississippi Delta butting heads with punk rock. And these aggregations - with apologies to Mule and Speedball Baby - are the standard bearers. The Oblivians are from Memphis, Spencer and the Cranks from New York. Still, that hardly matters. In every city of this great country there is a youngster who would willingly let himself be sliced to pieces for any of these bands' verses. Or for the deconstructionist take on the music. They are his pride, his craft, his vice. He (or she) cuts himself off from everyone by his love of, and faith in, the work - so easy to find, yet so difficult to understand and to defend. For how does one justify such herky jerky responses to brutalized expressions of unfulfillable desire? By celebrating the ludicrousness of a caucasian aping the sounds of his Afro-American betters (unlike Mick and his Stones who made a beautiful noise in their heyday with the tension inherent in their attempts to refashion the sound of the black man) a la Spencer? By going the Stones one better and imagining that

both blues and rock and roll began and ended with the Cramps and cheesy horror flicks (cf. the transcendent and morbidly magnificent Chrome Cranks)? Or by saying "fuck it" to all of it, turning everything up and diving into your own irrelevance as with the magesterial Oblivians? It's your call; although anyway you choose look at it, these three releases put to rout forever the propagated notion that rock is dead and the only milk it emits is Rancid imitation from Nirvana's Bush. Or something like that. (PCP/Crypt/Matador) ds

### Harry Connick, Jr. - *Star Turtle*

This is a joke, right? No one is really this stupid *and* talentless. Except maybe Frank Sinatra, Jr., although I'd be willing to give you 5 to 2 even he'd be ashamed to sing lyrics like "I thought I learned from geting burned/I bought a suit of armor and a silver cane/I found a little man who'd be proud of me/But he had to get up early/ And I had to get back to my pain." Well, maybe not. But what about if it was set to lightweight New Orleans styled funk? No? You'd still think he'd roll the dice? Yeah, you're right; he'd suck your dick for the price of a beer. Connick may not come that cheap; still, he's obviously keeping some high-powered executive happy at Columbia Records. There's no other explanation for the release of such a wretched piece of work as *Star Turtle* other than a nine

inch long tongue and the ability to breathe solely through the nose for inordinate lengths of time. (Columbia) ds

### Cows - *Old Gold* (1989-91)

Sloppy, snide and swaggering art-noise rocking with the best of anything coming out of lower Manhattan, *Old Gold* is a welcome anodyne to the recent lackluster releases of this Minneapolis quartet. Listeners familiar only with *Sexy Pee Story* or *Whorn* will find themselves more than pleasantly surprised with this angular, primitive and bombastic collection of post punk hostility. While Shannon Selberg's atrabilious bray is the ostensible focal point, it's Thor Eisentrager's drastically indifferent approach to the guitar that's the real sell here. The boy plays at *not* playing, choppy chording often giving way to ham-fisted rhythm work before descending to wild bouts of feedback-drenched showboating. Somehow, somehow, the drummer and bassist, buried in the mix, manage to keep time. Almost. (AmRep) ds

### Billy "Crash" Craddock - *Crash's Smashes*

The first man to fuse country with rock. Or so the liner notes say. We always thought it was Elvis or maybe Conway Twitty who went first. Or Carl Perkins or Gene Vincent. Or Eddie Cochran or Jerry Lee Lewis. Or Johnny Burnette or your mom.

Anyway, what this insipid pretty-boy actually done did was inject a strong strain of treacle into rockabilly. The kind of confections you hear on Nashville Today and other goober-vision stations in the dinner theatre personages of Billy Ray Cyrus, Clint Black, Garth Brooks, et al. Sweet melodies, homogenized singing, unobjectionable arrangements laced with the merest soupcon of twang and pedal steel, a hapless reminder of the tenuous connection this innocuous, mawkish sweetmeat has with the West Virginia backwoods. If your idea of a good time

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your twitchy little butt. Because they're not only sugary and light as cotton candy, they're smooth. Smooth as Blanton's. But we are men. And we drink Fightin' Cock. (Razor & Tie) sj & ds

### **The Cybermen - The Cybermen**

A mod-influenced relic from the heyday of the Harrisburg sixties punk revival. We think. We had originally written this review out on paper with a felt tip pen, burning all of the record company promo materials accompanying the disc in my apartment as is our custom. After demolishing a case of Pilsner of El Salvador and most of a half gallon of bourbon, Dom undertook the hour long drive back to Casa Brutarian and, upon arriving safely, fell into a puddle in his driveway promptly dropping off to sleep there for the evening. His dog huddled next to him so as to provide warmth, Dom survived the chilly night with little more than a mild case of hypothermia. The pen and ink reviews however had metamorphosized into a pinata-like paper mache lump by morning. The Cybermen review was illegible. Far too lazy to replay the disc, we can tell you that we recall hearing lots of echoes of Stones, Yardbirds and Pretty Things - a little Creation too. The thing was definitely better than the last eight or ten Who lps. But then so were Tejana singing sensation Selena's

posthumously released "Chinga Vida" recordings. (Estrus) sj & ds

### **Dearly Beheaded - Temptation**

Heavy music gets such a bad rap these days and lest anybody use the "M" word to be descriptive . . . but kiddies the gods of metal are very very angry at the state of your record collection . . . ballsackless pussy boys run and hide cuz the thud rock underground is spoonfed and writhing and at a record store near you! This one rocks mightily despite voice a little prettier n' I like. Just knowing there is music with sack being created somewhere on this rotting orb allows me to sleep at night . . . Congrats on the MAMMOTH guitar sound fellers and if ya really gotta know what it sounds like yo just gonna hafta use a crowbar, pry yer wallet away from your sweaty ass . . . and buy this! (Fierce Recordings) tesco vee

### **D Generation - No Lunch**

For boys and girls unfamiliar with The New York Dolls, this Thunderish melodic glam rock quartet will come as something of a revelation. Because there really aren't too many combos out there rocking this ferociously and retroactively with such abandon. Ric Ocasek has cleaned things up a bit and helped to refashion such smart cuts as "No Way Out" and "Degenerated" but is astute enough to encourage the sloppiness

and contempt which is the hallmark of the band's almost absurdly self-conscious style. Those over the age of fourteen debating whether to purchase that recently unearthed Dolls bootleg would probably find themselves far happier springing for *No Lunch*. (Columbia) ds

### **Martin Denny - Forbidden Island/Primitiva/Afro-Desia**

Wrestling with his latent homosexuality and feelings of betrayal engendered by *Exotica I & II* collaborator Arthur Lyman's departure to form his own groupe de primitif in 1958, Denny produced and recorded the facile *Forbidden Island*, an lp replete with tinker-toy Hawaiianisms, knockabout marimba, annoying bird calls and treacly melodies. Perhaps an effective backdrop for a sashay through the bird section of your local pet store but hardly the Sardanapalian monument Denny intended. Following its inevitable commercial failure and enraged by turncoat Lyman's concomitant success, Denny accepted and fulfilled a three month engagement at the Bora Bora Lounge in Hawaii, where he eventually decided to up the ante in the exotica sweepstakes and "avoid the cliches of pop recordings at this time" by releasing the ophidian *Primitiva*. Unfortunately, Harry Belafonte was by now firmly ensconced at the top of the charts with "Day-O"



# various movements in rock



## BLACK RHYTHM AND BLUES

## WHITE ROMANTIC CROONING

### Amplification

No amplification needed

### Rock

### SPOKEN WORD

Henry Rollins

### CLASSIC ROCK

hard, Southern rock  
Elvis Presley  
("Heartbreak Hotel")

Mule



### Dirty Three

*Horse Stories*  
tg165 2xLp \$13.00 / Cd \$13.00

Little Richard  
("Long Tall Sally")

Beatles  
("I Want To Hold Your Hand")

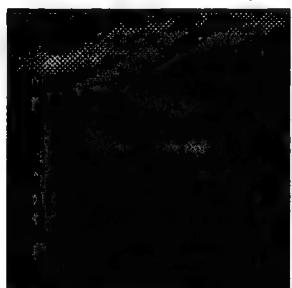
Stones  
Laughing Hyenas  
Yardbirds

### BAROQUE ROCK

Procul Harum  
("Whiter Shade Of Pale")

### CLASSICAL ROCK

Emerson Lake and Palmer



### Rachel's

*The Sea and The Bells*  
qs38 2xLp \$14.00 / Cd \$13.00

Virgin Prunes  
early soul

Berry Gordy

Ray Charles

### SOUL

Miracles  
("Shop Around")

### FUNK

Big Boys

### DISCO

Donna Summer  
Die Kruezen  
Rodan



### Polvo

*Exploded Drawing*  
tg162 2xLp \$12.00 / Cd \$13.00

### HAT ROCK

June of 44

### ELECTRONIC ROCK

Sir Christopher Scott  
("Switched-On Bacharach")  
Brainiac

### PURE ROCK

Eddie Cochran



### Mekons

*The Edge Of The World*  
qs42 Cd \$13.00

Temptations

New Wet Kojak

Supremes

Four Tops

early  
Bob Dylan  
Cash Money

### FOLK ROCK

Byrds  
("Mr. Tambourine Man")  
The Sonora Pine

### NORTHERN ROCK

soft, high-school rock

Frankie Avalon  
("Venus")

Fleetwoods  
("Come Softly To Me")

### DEATH ROCK

Mark Dinning  
("Teen Angel")  
Killdozer

### SURF ROCK

Beach Boys, ect.

Tradewinds  
("New York's a Lonely Town")



### Girls Against Boys

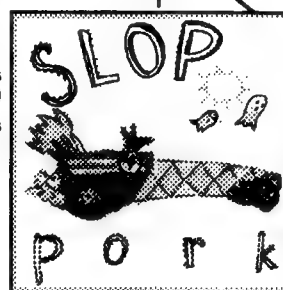
*Disco Six Six Six*  
tg166 Cd \$5.50

### ACID ROCK

Byrds  
("Eight Miles High")

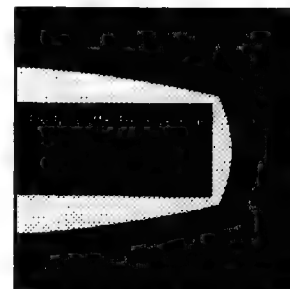
### SUBTEEN ROCK

Ohio Express



### Pork

*Slop*  
ej07 Lp \$9.00 / Cd \$12.00



### Phono-Comb

*Fresh Gasoline*  
qs43 Lp \$9.00 / Cd \$12.00

### SHOCK ROCK

Scratch Acid

Arthur Brown  
("Fire")

### INTERSTELLAR ROCK

Man or Astro-Man?



### Peter Jeffries

*Elevator Madness*  
ejo9 Lp \$9.00 / Cd \$12.00

### UNDERGRAD ROCK

Cargo Cult

The Chapel Hill Era

Seam

The Delta 72

and Caribben field songs, Tiki-themed pool parties were all the rage and suburban restaurants throughout the land were plying their customers with fruity, paper-adorned rum concoctions. Cliche was in and so Denny's more atavistic compositions were consigned to the dustbin of pop history. Undaunted, Martin cast his addled gaze to the dark continent and delived a fatuous deliciae stuffed with cockhanded takes on dusky ephmera. Sounds with which even the most discerning astro-pad bachelor was unfamiliar. Sales remained abysmal but the thaumaturgic cretinism of this misguided obscurantism was so engagingly silly it became something of a cult item. Listening to *Afro-Desia* today one is struck by its playfulness, its desperate desire to engage. It's almost impossible to dislike. Unless, of course, you're black. (Scamp) sj & ds

#### **Earth - Penstar: In The Style Of Demons**

Slow, slower and slower still. That was *Earth 2* a work of plodding, fuzzy beauty. With *Penstar*, tempos are adagio as opposed to adagissimo freeing the band to build something of a groove. A druggy, sluggish groove reminiscent of Black Sabbath. Black Sabbath stripped to the rhythm tracks. Monochromatic utterance and atmospheric touches replacing guitar pyrotechnics and vocal histrionics. Spacey

soundscapes aspiring to silence politely interject to break the sublime monotony. A subtly chaotic reading of Hendrix's "Peace In Mississippi" begs our kind indulgence. Long live the new psychedelica. (Sub Pop) ds

#### **Eight-Ball Shifter - Hanson**

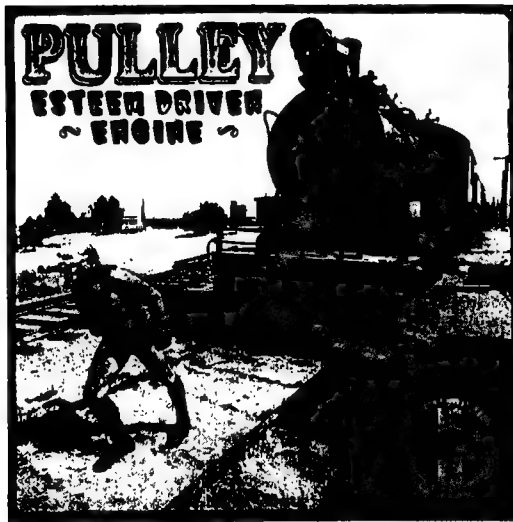
Much creepier and sepulchral than their muscle-car appellation suggests, Eight-Ball Shifter is a low-fi garage band working the same graveyard as the Cramps and cartoon Gothics like Alien Sex Fiend but with a mordant sensibility so pronounced as to be generally unnerving. Song titles like "Haunted Beaches" and "Party At The Bottom Of The Swamp" may be kitschy but the determinedly primitive production and atavistic performances are so demented they border on the obscene. These guys may have weened themselves on AIP drive-in fare but they're clearly ready for midnight trysts at the local mortuary. Although Ian Adams bone-chilling moans and groans on cuts like "Dracula's Daughter" and "Nekron '69" hint at depravities far more loathsome. (Clamarama, Box 422, Allston, MA 02134) ds

**Fastbacks - New Mansions in Sound**  
Seattle's Fastbacks have been churning out their brand of power pop for more than 15 years, long before Seattle became a haven for Cobain Youth,

i.e., flannel-wearing, heroin-addicted, whining, directionless slackers. *New Mansions* is the latest installation in an on-going saga: Kurt Bloch's dour lyrics contrast sharply with his peppy melodies, which are often sweetened by Kim Warnick's and Lulu Gargiulo's harmonies. For the most part, Bloch has a deft touch as a producer as well. He shows a slight lack of restraint, however, toward the end of the disc, where some tracks run too long. And the weaknesses of Warnick's baby-girl voice becomes all too apparent after a while. But the Fastbacks redeem themselves in the end with an ace cover of Keith Moon's "Girl's Eyes." (Sub Pop) df

#### **Fishbone - Chim Chim's Badass Revenge**

A couple years ago. Fishbone are onscreen live via satellite during a wrestling telecast. Banter going nowhere fast, the musicians and the sports announcers come off like they've just been stricken with a bad case of the "What the hell have we gotten ourselves into here?" disease. Awkward interview over, Fishbone are never mentioned on a wrestling show thereafter.



Scott ← ex-Scared Straight  
ex-Ten Foot Pole

Mike ← ex-Scared Straight

Matt ← ex-Face To Face

Jordan ← Strung Out

Jim ← Strung Out

**C.D. L.P. CASS.**  
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What were Fishbone doing on such a program in the first place? The WWF had actually hired these guys to perform the National Anthem at Wrestlemania! As noted, it never came off; but just imagine what a mondo moment it would have been. With Bone's if-Dweezil-Zappa-grew-up-in-Detroit sound, mat fans would've worn their fingernails down to stubs scratching their heads.

If you're already a staunch Fishbone fan, you definitely need to get your mitts on *Chim Chim's Badass Revenge* as the Fishers and crew punch a ton of wallop into 15 tracks here, pulling off their usual balancing act of rock, reggae, funk, fusion and hardcore tighter than Barbie's buns. The

uninitiated, however, may be beter ingesting just a few tracks at a sitting; otherwise, the sonic assault might maim your mainframe.

Although Fishbone make music more likely to be heard on college radio than anywhere else, they're not about to play "the entertaining Negro" for anyone. They are one pissed-off band - analogous to the early Brit punkers - as the lyrics to "In The Cube," "Alcoholic," "Riot" and other cuts clearly demonstrate. "Rock Star," in particular, is an angry indictment of a record industry that nurtures childish behavior and racism. Just 'cause you're black and have a social conscience, doesn't mean you "have to" be a rapper,

stoopit . . . which Fishbone demonstrates with every note they play. (Columbia) stately wayne manor

#### **The Flyin' Saucers - The Flyin' Saucers**

Every town has a band like this. This is Columbus, Ohio's. Weened on Johnny Burnette, Jack Scott, Billy Riley, Sonny Fisher. Self-consciously sloppy, big beat, big bottom, hoarse manly vocals, Dixie-Starday rockabillyish solos. O.K., you have five thousand records. Would you listen to this one twice? Probably not, but if you had nothing to do on a Saturday night, and these guys were playing at your local, self-conscious retro dive, you wouldn't think twice about blowing a few clams for the five dollar cover. Especially if there were alot of girls inside. Young girls. Girls who don't know Ronnie Dawson from Richard Dawson. (Oahu Records) sj & ds

#### **The 4-Skins - Best Of**

We love bands who sing of being poor, white and

beating the shit out of those who are not. Even if they are skinheads. And probably Nazis too. James Brown and Jerry Lee Lewis beat their wives and we still buy their records. Because they don't sing about it. And The 4-Skins keep their politics to themselves. So we can like them. Even if half of the combo ended up in Skrewdriver. We absolve them from all guilt. And thus we feel safe in telling you how much we like their fuzzy, over-the-top sound. The bass-driven, high-action pogo rhythms. The spent, exhortatory singing and Wagnerian grandeur of it all. The real thing. Maybe a bit too real. (Goebels Records) sj & ds

**Frogpond - Count To Ten**  
Hey, I don't know about much but I know if you structure all of your pop rock (mid-80s normative) with the hokey-pokey sonic realities by way of Cobain/Phair, waltz around the vocals and their attendant importance to the structure of your music, you best be as good as Scrawl as well as possess the intro-acuity to row, row, row the boat without realying on words and voice only. *Count To Ten* is full of Bangles' throwaways from sorority girls all jacked-up on Breeders'-jeans-and-t-shirts aesthetic; hence no puke on the shoes, no one getting poked by needle or dick in some indie rock crashpad etc., and as you noticed a line ago, fashion not musical sensibility. If it

was worse it would be entertaining; one hopes they play with a substantial amount of energy live (and in fur bikinis or covered in mud or something) 'cause they would certainly "rock" the Lemonheads' audience if the Dandy one was so decked out. In any case, I suggest these gals hop on down to the used record shop and bone up on those old Absolute Grey and Salem 66 lps as well as the early Jeff Airplane, as this is el blando. To get me or any discerning listener to care however, one of 'em would have to be able to shit in her own mouth or tie her labia in knots. Or just announce they was quitting the music biz (Croak Records) cr

**Frogs - My Daughter The Broad**

Not just a CD but a social barometer, too! You'll not find Mr. Manor cruising Castro or Christopher Street watering holes nor Loisada meat markets; nonetheless, anyone comfortable with their sexuality - which likely excuses most of America - should find this disc a hoot.

With more references to "cocks" that at a poultry famers' convention, brothers Jimmy and Dennis Fleming will have some believing their "gay supremacists" self-billing while others will join the hotheads calling them "homophobes." Me, I suspect the bros are a couple of pranksters doing their best to offend the PC Posse, baiting the

sanctimonious into looking foolish for condoning the band's political mercurialism rather than laughing at the absurdity of the venture. Only a cretin, after all, would take a title like "Who's sucking on grandpa's balls since grandma ain't home tonight?" seriously.

The Frogs perform pervofolk: mostly acoustic instrumentation, non-drummer drumming and crude, wildly amusing lyrics which sound as if they're improvised on the spot. An excellent lease-breaker, *My Daughter* is the perfect disc to thin out a room overcrowded with posturing "tough" guys and other assorted no-fun types.

All things considered, if *Brutarian* were a talk show, The Frogs would be an ideal house band. (Matador) stately wayne manor

**Diana Froley - You're Not Broke But I'm Going to Fix You**

I love the title, but this is downright fecal - painfully out-of-tune banjos and mostly acoustic guitars backing Froley's off-key baby talk. Froley wants to project a sense of unskilled innocence, maybe like the Shaggs. At least the Shaggs had a certain purity through ignorance. They were sheltered kids who didn't know any better! Froley should have!

Froley's allusions to Iggy Pop and covers of songs by

Roky Erickson and Jonathan Richman make it plain that she's heard some great records. But she learned all the wrong lessons from them. She misinterpreted her heroes' efficiency and uses it to justify her complete incompetence. And then she had the nerve to stretch her misreading over 24 songs. This sow has committed the grievous sin of wasting my time! At least I didn't have to spring for this.

People think that being a critic for a high-profile publication such as *Brutarian* is glamorous and exciting. Sure, you get your name on a few guest lists and receive a handful of Cds a year that are worth keeping. But it's time spent listening to this sort of crap that turn my first love, i.e., listening to music, into **A FUCKING JOB!!!** And to make matters worse, I won't see a dime for this review because Dom is a good friend and swears that he loses thousands of bucks per issue so that he can publish this labor of love for your reading pleasure! But dude, what did I do to deserve this assignment?

If I were hosting an ordinary vinyl session (or whatever they call the CD equivalent these days), I could rip it out of the player and toss it across the room as though it were just so much worthless excrement. But I'm fair-minded - I listened to it, in its entirety, once. And unlike others who write for Audio

Deprivation, I won't speculate on Ms. Froley's sexual propensities and just what she likes to do with strangers at bus stations. (Serious) df

### **Glazed Baby - Atomic Communists**

The sound of hate. We hate it. That must be good. Agonizing bits of misanthropy follow hard upon gonizing bits of misanthropy. Tuneless, barely-shaped noise disgraced with drano-gargled vocals. The lower end as the living end fecklessly deocrated with odd bits of guitar squall. Death comes to us all. Glazed Baby waits in a fever of anticipation. With closed eyes. The better to see in the miasmic twilight of their own perfervid vacuousness. Whatever. (Red Decibel) sj & ds

### **Grotus - Mass**

In the outtakes part of the *This is Spinal Tap* CD-ROM, bassist Derek Smalls discusses making a solo album with instrumentation composed solely of bass guitars. Grotus nearly does just that on *Mass*, a CD of bass-dominated industrial/dirge metal/hip-hop that lies in a netherworld somewhere between Nine Inch Nails and Rollins Band. They've got a big bottom and a big-time bad attitude to boot. Bassists Adam Tanner and John Carson anchor the rhythm section, while Lars Fox rails against modern boredom with a bellow that bizarrely mixes Iggy Pop and Warren Haynes of the

Allman Brothers Band. Yes, life stinks, they need a drink (several, actually) and most people are dicks. But Grotus' judicious use of sampling and mix of beat boxes and live drums keeps *Mass* from becoming a mere conceptual exercise. (London) df

### **The Halibuts - Life on the Bottom**

Dick Dale once told me in a dream that the mark of a good surf band is both a strong melodic sensibility and a unique guitar sound. The Halibuts have been around for fifteen years so they probably succeed on both counts although I really couldn't say for sure not being a student of froth. What this gremmie hears though is winsome, engaging ah, surf, possessing all the charm and naivete of such pioneers of the genre as The Rumlbers and The Revels. Lacking the menace and inveterate psychosis of the aforementioned progenitors, however *Life on the Bottom* attempts to substitute ingenuous arrangements, bonhomie, and melodic bits of r&b, Hawaiian, and just plain kitsch. While the strategy results in, at best, only moderately tubular tunes, it's still a rather





© Wink '75

Jesus Christ Descending a Staircase

interesting take on post-modern beach music. (Upstart) ds

### Hotel X - Uncommon Grounds

Having the instantly recognizable Greg Ginn write and play guitar on the disc-opening title track points out a basic flaw in Hotel X - their playing, while technically competent, lacks charisma and passion. After Ginn's sonic salvo, they settle into a series of mundane, mid-tempo jazz grooves. They make occasional excursions into skronkland, but the variations don't break the tedium. Rather, *Uncommon Grounds* is an

exercise in seeing how many different ways they can configure their multi-instrumental lineup. (SST) df

**Hula Hoop - The Loveliest Ring of Saturn**  
Look, if you're gonna listen to this sissy indie-rock bubble-gum, feel free. But jeez, it's like some sorta nothing 'er something. There's nice, stretchy, delicate acid-pop guitar, and it hangs together OK. Ho hum. Chiming Americana like that horrible folk-pop phase Yo La Tengo went through about six years back 'er so. I can't really remember. It's too painful to even think

about. *Saturn* is lite but assertively played in a kinda plaintive way. It gets somewhat interesting by the seventh tune and does a couple of nice quirky-cum-trippy tricks from there on out; although I could name seven hundred better records in ten minutes. (Yeah it's cheating to include all the Fuzzhead tapes. So I cheat. Cheating only hurts the cheater. You know this is true because I'm sitting here listening to *this*.) To think that these guys play the same instruments and use many of the same notes and tempos as say, The Wolverton Bros., is astonishing. You give paint to one fellow and BOOM!: Sistine Chapel. Then you watch a stooge with the same palette painting little flowers on the edge of a love letter to his (kinda) girlfriend. "No man, she's only dating those guys at college to maintain, you know, a normal social life. I trust her man. We're cool with it." (Silver Girl) cr

### Humble Gods - No Heroes

... must retain objectivity . . . cast aside all preconceptions, prejudices, and predilections with every new platter. During analysis, each creative consortium starts clean slated to stardom . . . or headed to the punk rock poor farm . . . Folks who review said recorded output all think they are hot duty, but we all know Rock journalists are the LOWEST LIFE FORM ON THE PLANET, and they all

suck BIG RED PIMENTO  
LOOKIN' DOGGY PENIS!  
ME? Casually dismiss a  
piece of work some poor  
slob just labored months  
over? Christ I ain't got to  
cus these So. Cali (ya gotta  
live someplace) pukers are  
peddlin' hard tack aggro  
like the good old days, with  
crafty songwritin', mucho  
hooks and those all man  
chant choruses I dig so  
well. This disc gives a  
much needed shot to my  
jaded and prehistoric  
cranium, and renews my  
faith that musique de'  
muscle still exists. With all  
the pussy boy NOFX  
soudin' bands (you can't  
polish a turd . . . but you  
can paint it) proliferatin' I  
was beginning to wonder . .  
. Straight up in a dirty glass  
. . . I'll have a double . . .  
(Hollywood Records) tesco  
vee

#### **George Jones & Gene Pitney**

Men aren't supposed to  
sound like Patsy Cline. But  
as Patsy Cline was dead  
dimwitted hillbilly music  
svengali C.W. "Pappy"  
Daily cleverly chose to  
mate manly legend George  
Jones with the epicine Gene  
Pitney and prayed nobody  
would notice. The upshot  
was a pair of 1965 country  
"duet" long players which  
Bear family has decided to  
re-release as a pricey CD.  
A third all-Pitney LP,  
originally entitled "Gomer  
Pyle in Pink Tights" was  
apparently added to the disc  
as an afterthought. Or a  
cruel joke. While all three  
platters were warmly  
embraced by habitues of  
Fayetteville's rough trade

bars, country fans were  
enraged. According to  
numerous police reports  
emanating from the deep  
South, irate record buyers  
were breaking into stores  
just to smash the vinyl and  
set fire to the covers. The  
recording company blamed  
the English Invasion. This  
should come as no surprise.  
After Pitney, America  
needed, um, real males.  
(Bear Family) sj & ds

#### **King Crimson - ThrakAttak**

Like the Grateful Dead's  
*Infrared Roses*, *ThrakAttak*  
is an hour-long seamless  
collage of live  
improvisation. Unlike the  
Dead's effort, however,  
*ThrakAttak* holds together  
cohesively, due to the  
stellar musicianship of the  
current Crimson lineup and  
their use of the vast array of  
technology at their  
disposal. Framed by  
excerpts from "Thrak" and  
recorded during several  
shows last year, the sound  
leaps between ambient  
soundscapes and more  
aggressively cacophonous  
free-form surges,  
highlighted by some  
sublimely angular fretwork  
from Bob "Chuckles"  
Fripp. It never quite  
coalesces into anything you  
can hum, but rarely does it  
stray into directionless  
noodling. (Discipline  
Global Mobile) df

#### **Kula Shaker - K**

Just what the world needs,  
warmed-over Donovan with  
modern-rock-radio-friendly  
big production. Kula  
Shaker's Pink Floyd-joins-  
the Stone Roses-on-

holiday-in-Marrakesh  
sound is mildly engaging,  
but they sure can be dippy.  
They'd call their dippiness  
spirituality, but spirituality  
is a refuge for knuckleheads  
who nave nothing else  
going for them. Still,  
"Tattva," their radio hit,  
beats the crap out of  
anything on the Oasis  
album. (Columbia) df

#### **LaBradford - Kranky**

We know nothing of  
LaBradford. If that is,  
indeed, their name. They  
have sent us a disc enclosed  
in a simple white cover  
stamped with an address.  
On this unadorned CD, we  
are presented with moody,  
disquieting soundscapes;  
compositions with little  
aspirations other than to  
being . . . moody,  
disquieting soundscapes.  
Not so mean a feat. Pink  
Floyd has been butting their  
heads against the wall  
trying to effectuate the  
same for years with little to  
show for it. Of course,  
Floyd sings, while  
LaBradford, clever boys  
that they are, mutter and  
murmur. Truly, very truly,  
music for the dark side of  
the moon. (Box 578743,  
Chicago, IL 60657) ds

#### **Llybr Llaethog - Mewn Dub**

A cult release from a Welsh  
activist dub aggregate  
issued in the early '90s,  
*Mewn Dub* works  
beautifully on a high-end  
stereo system but has little  
else to recommend it.  
Taking traditional dub  
forms and infusing them  
with hip hop rhythms, the  
odd spacey or industrial

sound effect or two and Welsh vocal exhortations, this ROIR re-release has not fared well with the passage of time. The opening cuts, with their sinuous bass lines and reverberating, shimmering guitars bouncing from speaker to speaker are delightful, but things all too quickly degenerate to a miasma of disco affectation. A shame, really, as the production is magnificent and the full-bodied sound literally begs for innovation. Which, unfortunately, never comes. (ROIR) ds

#### **Lollipop - Dog Piss On Dog**

"Yownasha ona doubleto" lead singer Marc announces between songs at one point on this absurdist noise rock celebration; yet he says it with such conviction you almost forget he's speaking in phonics of his own devise. Which matters not a whit. Because what's going on here is a challenge. A deconstructionist punk throw-down to alcoholic visionaries Jon Spencer and the Chrome Cranks. By way of cacaphonies like "Drunken Disordelaireo" and the refashioned garage classic "Seven Is Seven."

For those unmoved by affronts to ineffectual, ill-defined, post-modern movements there remains the unmitigated hostility, mindless exuberance and all-embracing stupidity. As well as the lead singers' refusal to ululate in anything remotely

resembling a language spoken on this planet. Mayhap it would be best to leave it to Marc, who in a marvelous bit of brevity, has this ready-made response to his putative detractors: "Ah gwona eat me kilter toat." Now who can argue with that? It's authentic fin-de-siecle dada blues gibberish! (AmRep) ds

#### **Mazzy Star - Among My Swan**

Ah, Mazzy Star! Those subtly stalking melody lines. That ethereal, vaguely sepulchral voice of Hope Sandoval. The gentle lull of acoustic now electric guitar overlaid with vague intimations of unrest. Strings soothe, harmonicas tease, funereal organ figures whisper "all that is beautiful cannot stay." Bent, blissful largely rhythmic six-string exercises dulcify. The sound the stars make when they sing together . . . And Hope! Ah sweet Hope! The lillies lay as if asleep along her bended arm. Blessed damozel leaning out from the gold bar of heaven. Her songs, her dazed emoting, tease us beyond ourselves. Leading to a prayer: To live once on earth with Love. For ever now. Together, I and she (Capitol) ds

#### **M-80's - M-80's**

Hi-gear garage punk rife with hysterical shrieks, fuzz guitar, harmonica riffage, Pretty Things' covers and originals that sound like Pretty Things' covers. If you like the Pretty Things,

own all of the Pretty Things' records and really miss The Pretty Things alot you should probably pick up on the M-80's. To be fair, the combo does some Creation and Blues Magoos covers too. Nevertheless, each of the first one hundred M-80's discs is smeared with a genuine bit of Phil May's caca. Interestingly, it doesn't stink. But then, neither does ours. (Reid Recordings) sj & ds

#### **Namanax - Cascading Waves Of Electronic Turbulence**

Here we have something that tells you up front exactly what you're getting. Yes, the title, does indeed, say it all: cascading waves of electronic turbulence. These guys hail from Pennsylvania, and while Pennsylvania is a big place, I'd be willing to bet the boys grew up some place near Three Mile Island as they're obviously insane. The cd contains just two tracks, "Contaminating Influence" which runs over eleven minutes, and the title piece which attempts to turn your brain to guacamole in forty-eight. "Instruments employed?" you ask. Don't bother, the "music" - making devices used herein are not available on this planet. There is a definite rhythm to these "songs" though, but it's more like the cadences you might discern over a radio transmitter pointed toward deep space. Imagine the noisiest parts of films like *Zontar The Thing From Venus* or *The*

*Angry Red Planet* looped together and put into a very snappy cd package. Drone, intermittent bleeps, waves of feedback, distortion: they're here in abundance. As I write this, my faithful dog just decided she's had enough and moved into another room. You get the point. Under no circumstances listen to this disc using headphones after you've smoked a buttload of dope. You may never come back. But don't get me wrong. Like it? Hell, yes! (Relapse) The Pope

### **Neurosis - Through Silver in Blood**

This is a band from San Francisco who play death-metal, or death-rock, or . . . oh hell, forget those labels. They play loud dumb-guy music. You know what I mean: big guitars and a singer screaming in a variety of voices. At one extreme, a high-pitched one that sounds like he's just been in a car wreck with his friends. At the other, one that sounds like James Earl Jones on a Bell Atlantic commercial only an octave lower. As far as this kind of stuff goes, it's better than most. Neurosis even throws in some weird, "arty" instruments like violin and bagpipes. Each song starts out slowly and builds, after about three minutes, to loud . . . er . . . well, yes, dumb-guy rock. Still, I'd rather see these guys than Metallica. What I really would like to see though, is this combo opening for Megadeath on their next tour. Now that would be dangerous.

(Relapse) The Pope

### **New Bomb Turks - Scared Straight**

Suburban soul: post-adolescents throwin' elbows, spillin' beer, coming up for air . . . and we get to here. From where? There. That's where! Now we're here, and here is where the Turks are, with you and me an' Little Richard, Richard Dawson, Richard Speck, Rickie Ricardo, and Rich Little. *Scared Straight* is an inside job, from the center of America, grounded in the seminal forms of revved-up huff this nation has vomited and tagged "rock" since the shit hit wax post WW II (last one clearly in the WIN column for us) and was jerked through the Brit tingle factor, i.e. melody refracted through said seminal forms and cleaned and kicked by teens tryin' to beat the pants off the Old World with this crazy/cool new music. Read: "excitement."

Yeah, the Turks play at punk speed, but compare this to another new Epitaph release (Total Chaos) to hear how little stereotypical "punk" is here and how much real whomp-ass rock is. But you say, "Hey, bullet head! We want something new fer chrissakes!"

NEW? NEW? FUCK  
NEW! Good! GOOD!!  
That's God's values - the Holy is our goal here goob.  
Not the "new"-watch-TV-for-new-buy-the-hippest-

English- sociology-lesson-plus-noise-plus-ethnic-heist-equals-"music"-to-go-with-your-cool-shirt for NEW! How stylish! You'll look great on the top of the junk heap next year, peanut.

This is what the Turks have added to their '90s take on "Train Kept A Rollin'"/"C'mon Everybody" aesthetic: overt nods to Jerry Lee and Dick Penniman piano; a swoosh/poke synth run that sticks like first lp Ubu; a couple very tight, vocally melodious "pop" blowouts a la Who '65/Devil Dogs '95; a chomping wallop (Prince quote included) which sounds like The Nomads' version of "Boss Hoss" rewritten to admit the break from "Psychotic Reaction" for added value; enough roadhouse speed hoopla to wango with Lemmy's recent tango; and a real smooth Silverhead goes Black Crowes mid-tempo tune which spells "S-t-o-n-e-s" to the large and small-minded alike.

Concluding: *Scared Straight* is a consolidation of the Turks' past strengths combined with some forward poking into rock and rolls' garage, basement and rec room. Very good. Too bad the seven inch wasn't appended to the CD, it's pretty hot with the Nubs' cover an' all. (Epitaph) cr

**The Olympics - Doin' The Hully Gully/Dance by The Light of the Moon/Party**


## Time

Get up on yo' feets white chirrun. Is party time! Got mile-high conks. Got da muddy, late nite dance mixtures.. Got matchin' show ('enuf) suits in colors an textures be alluring only to negroes. Twist. Pony. Stomp. Do da Madison - and when you loaded up enough, just shuffle yo' cracker ass arhythmically. Is all for yo' white chirrun. Dig it. We doan care. We gots da comfortablis, high-tone shoes. De slinky bitches slinkin'. Loads of Mad Dog wif our rib tips. An a clean, dark bathroom. We be eat, drinkin' and merry. You peckerwoods should too. Dough you can't dance and don't know shit from shinola. Which we do havin' worked for years at de shoestands for you uptight, poorly-dressed suit-and-tie johns. Ya. I say ya! Jes 'cause I can and you matahave troubles wif it. All in alls, Ise disgusted wit you fools. Buy de reckid, so's I can res'. (Ace) Olympus Jones

## 101 Strings - Astro-Sounds From The Year 2000

Zap us all with love! Happy plastic love! Open the valves to the hot tub! Disrobe! And dance! Dance! Dance! Dance! Think not of Dionysus though. Sway, sway, and let the mind wander in the winking strobe light while ineffectual strings, effeminate fuzz, middle-brow psychedelia and St. Tropez discotheque phantasmagorias test the strength of the leather cord

tethering the ankh to your lithe, glistening neck. Yes! Let it rise in the air as Euro-trash porno soundscapes prod you into tumescence. Largesse granted despite aesthetic reservations. As we must, as only the most unforgiving and ineffectual hedonist would allow him or herself to listen to this mind-bending recherche treacle fully clothed. (Scamp) sj & ds



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## Opressor - Agony

Lars squatted, positioned and finally dismissed a smoothie into the gaping hole he had meticulously crafted in his mother's chest with a 12 guage slug. As 77 DB of the new OPRESSOR glared from the massive 1971 bookshelf speakers, several of the older cockroahces lost their footing on the smoothe walnut surface and tumbled

into the morass of fast food wrappers, cum rags, syringes, and rotting flesh. "Fucking cunt" he muttered as he threw on pants and headed out for a dime bag. . . (MIA Records) tesco vee

## Thompson Owen -

### There's Always Someday

One Jonathan Richman is enough for this world. An ersatz Jonathan Richman who hangs out with Diana Froley is insufferable. An ersatz Jonathan Richman who hangs out with Diana Froley and justifies putting 34 songs on a CD with liner notes "SURPLUS IS NOT A SIN" is a self-indulgent weenie who deserves to be smacked. Unlike his co-producer Froley, however, this Owen geek plays somewhat in tune and has an elementary sense of songcraft. (Serious) df

## Phoenix Thunderstone - Ride Of The Lawless

Generic promo tapes suck cuz one of these guys might be beefcake and the review wouldn't cause so much pain and embaRRASSMENT... wanna get lower than a slug's butt depressed? Spend money on this! While I got yer attention best pickup line this month is "Fuck I bet you could really stink up a toilet!"... and whats wit the name? Is this the 90's equivalent of Thunderclapp Newman, or Atomic Rooster?! Neither neither I think I hear harmonica - good bye... (Scrathie Records) tesco vee

## Pig - Sinsation



Myriad comparisons notwithstanding, I'm transported to the early 90's and smack me with something new MOTHERFUCKER . . . this teutonic stomping is all well and good, and once every coupla codas I feel the Devil's presence but spooky, evil, underbelly muzak fails to rock the colon I fear . . . There's no hope until Jourgenson gets off the crack and uses them spaghetti arms fer breakin' convention and new ground . . . Till it goes down you're stuck with this . . . (Nothing Records) tesco vee

**Robert Pollard - Not in My Airforce**

**Tobin Sprout - Carnival Boy**

Guided by Voices lives, but its exact form remains to be determined. In the meantime, its two main songwriters, Robert Pollard and Tobin Sprout, have released solo CDs that closely resemble their contributions to GbV. The best tracks from each would have made a GbV CD at least as good as *Under the Bushes Under the Stars*, their last full-length release.

As expected, Pollard, who writes and sings about 85 percent of GbV's songs, produced the odder of the pair. His set staggers between semi-polished studio recordings and the roughest of demos in 22 tracks spread over 37 minutes. Several are among Pollard's best, most notably "Get Under It," "Flat Beauty" and "The Psychic Pilot Clocks Out."

Others, such as "Quicksilver" and "The Ash Grey Proclamation," show solid writing but would have been helped by enhanced production. Some are self-indulgently weird ("John Strange School"), while still more are outright dreck - the last six tracks, all of which were recorded solo acoustic, are half-baked ideas, not actual songs. That Pollard is a prolific songwriter with a rare gift for melody is beyond question. But his "capture the moment" style of recording often obscures songs that deserve better (see *Vampire on Titus*).

Though Pollard's muse fuels Guided by Voices, *Not in My Airforce* proves that he often needs his guild of bandmates to reign him in.

As guitarist and home recording maestro, Sprout is GbV's anchor. For *Carnival Boy*, he played nearly all the instruments himself. His disc is 14 songs of pure pop for middle-aged people, heavy on the jangles, spread over a mere 30 minutes. Though his influences are easier to spot than Pollard's, nearly all of it is top-shelf GbV. There just isn't enough of it to justify spending \$13-15. Like Pollard, Sprout's CD jumps between home recordings and finished studio recordings. His best songs here, most of which were studio recorded, are power pop gems. The re-recording of "It's Like Soul Man" is positively anthemic. Sprout's more subdued side indicates that

he studied his Simon & Garfunkel records well. But the two instrumentals are pure filler. Also, why use a drum machine for the home tracks when Kevin Fennell, who provides ace drumming on the studio tracks, is a phone call away? While Sprout's songs work just fine when interspersed as a break from Pollard's on GbV records, he doesn't yet have enough material to carry the ball by himself for a whole disc. (Matador) df

**Red Aunts - Saltbox**

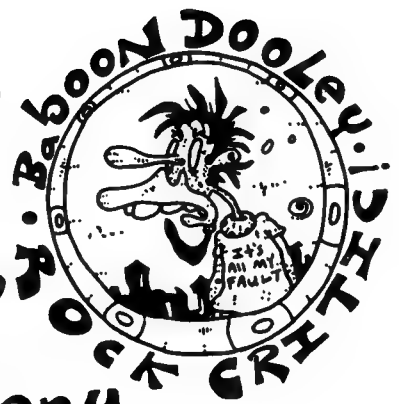
The jewel box contains only the band name and the title. Inside there are neither credits nor track listings. We put the disc on and are confronted with - surprise! - arty punk minimalism. A strategy wherein arrangement takes precedence over melody, statement replaces theme and something else important shoves aside something or other. Toward those ends, the Aunts employ such arresting devices as stop/start rhythms, minor key melodies, tart riffs, strident harmonizing and atonal vocalizing. While the later might prove an irritant for some, Saltbox's fourteen bombinating cuts (clocking in at a little over twenty-three minutes) buzz by like a disconcerting daydream. (Epitaph) ds

**Sacred System - Book of Entrance**

Superficially, dub attracts with its artificial graces, painted pallors, hieratic pomp, suggestions of



Beardo asks: "Are there Political Contradictions in Rage Against the Machine's



relationship with the Sony Entertainment Corporation?"



primordial ferocity and effeminate dreams of fantastic Jamaican copulations. Bill Laswell, born to this, transfigured by it, takes click-clack syncopation, sinuous bass lines, moody reverberating keyboard figures, the odd sound effect or two and wanders Jah-Wobbily up the forbidding slopes of Parnassus. An idyllic region where sap boils in the sunshine, fertilizing showers of pollen fall into the palpitating genitals of rubescent flowers, and the rain, when it comes, rains down like a life-affirming baptism. (ROIR) ds

#### **Salt - Auscultate**

Messier and sloppier than pop. Sensitive. Earnest. Deep, too. If you're fourteen. Lots of lyrics about loving and how untidy and good and busy it is. Sylvia Plath set to grunge rock. A happy, wimpy Plath before her marriage to Ted Hughes that is. Musical arrangements reminiscent of early Siouxsie and the Banshees sans edge and the acid. Nubile not noble. In other words, perfect musique for your almost-cutting edge FM station. (Island) sj & ds

#### **Santo and Johnny - Collectors Gold**

Ah, the sensuous, somnambulant sounds of adult twang. There's nothing like it. Hawaiian guitar with soothing rhythm guitar providing accompaniment. Other

pieces have that trademark sleepwalk six-string thing going. There's some other stuff in the background and it's nice but who cares?

Thirty-one cuts from a pair of long-forgotten 1960 releases. Thrill to heroic Hispanic updates on tunes you've never cared for:

"Over The Rainbow," "Old Man River," etc. Gasp in pleasure while you're spirited away on the Maui holiday that is "Pineapple Princess" and "Aloha."

Masturbate furiously to the soporific versions of "Theme From A Summer Place" and "Isle Of Dreams." The apotheosis of contemptuous melodicism. Must be over forty to purchase. Proof of age required. (Globe) sj & ds

#### **Scorn - Logghi Barogghi**

For all you noise lovers out there who've concluded that someone or other is the ne plus ultra of cacophony, I would like to present for your edification . . . Scorn. Scorn, now consisting solely of Mick Harris (ex-Napalm Death, Painkiller, etc.) blasting back to prominence with a soundtrack from Hell, to use an overworked line. Utilizing drumbeats buried deep in the mix (well, he *is* a drummer, you know), Harris has created fourteen mini-scenarios to accompany your next murder. Call it whatever you want. Ambient dub seems to be the latest moniker. Is Earache really trying to pull in that vast untapped New Age market? Doubtful. This stuff is not

soothing. Yanni definitely wouldn't like it, despite the attenuated vocalisms floating in and out. Of course, Yanni would never be able to figure out what the hell Harris is saying. Come to think of it, neither could I. Which is fine by me. In sum, this is the best Scorn since the *White Irises* *Blind* ep released several years ago. Don't let it get by you *and* don't hold your breath waiting for the covers album. (Earache) The Pope

#### **The Shadows - The Shadows Are Go!**

Any regular Brut reader knows we are big Shadows fans here at the manse - occasionally even chartering small, sleek jet planes to Europe during our mid-afternoon gimlet binges to search for hitherto unknown samples of Hank Marvin's legendary early sixties-era wide-screen guitar twang in the dangerous and exotic gypsy flea markets of Paris, Trieste and Barcelona. More often than not, we return with little more than new flick knife scars, head lice, bad hangovers, and a good story. But occasionally we strike pay-dirt. Such as the time Dom and I were in an Algerian-styled seraglio behind the waterfront in Marsailles. We were pushing our way through a thick crowd of lecherously drunken Foreign Legionnaires and olive-complected pied noir prostitutes when Dom - alert as always despite having "chased the dragon" only moments earlier -

spotted an immaculate copy of *Out of the Shadows* nestled on a sumptuous velvet pillow between the legs of a gigatonic turbaned hermaphrodite. Realizing any attempt at haggling with the androgynous Moor was useless, Dom pulled off his seersucker suit, doffed his boater, and began his infamous snake dance - the toast of several continents and discos throughout the northern Virginia area. Beguiled beyond endurance, the Afro emasculate left his sequined perch and lumbered toward Dom, bloodlust in his eyes. Quick as a cat, Steve spirited the pristine and heavily scented lp from its resting place and leapt into a speeding Citroen cab bound for Nice airport where he caught a quick flight to Dulles, leaving his partner swaying oblivious to his peril. Despite having spent several months as a serving boy on a freighter bound for Tunis, Oran and, eventually, Djakarta, even Dom was forced to agree that the snatch was well worth it. Shadows are Go! (Scamp) sj & ds

**Slaughter & The Dogs - Cranked Up Really High** Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Slaughter: the word and the act. While Slaughter cloaks itself in a plethora of disguises, its favorite mantle still remains the bold, action-packed guitar stylings of Mick Ronson. Slaughter devours all it touches; its voracious appetite rarely fulfilled. Yet Slaughter does not always destroy; it creates

and molds as well. Let us examine closely this dangerously evil creation, this new breed once encased and contained in a pulsing, scaborous skin of unmitigated punk. The rancor is here as well as the unmistakable smell of the sewer. The latter clearly the result of the slaughter of primitive musical forms and the dicing of equally primitive rhythms. Done so that the rest of us might have the wherewithal to live. To move about freely. To not think so much. They died for you fifteen years past. Now return the favor. (Ahory) ds & sj

#### **The Sort of Quartet - Bombas de Amor**

The Sort of Quartet's mixture of Latin and jazz influences succeeds most when they stick to a two-guitar, bass and drum format. When Guitarists Gary Arce and Mario Lalli trade leads over complex rhythms, as on "Egg Holes," the sound is focused and purposeful although lacking in emotional fervor. When the six-stringers trade in their axes to show off their horn-playing ambitions, however, they float off into a sea of self-indulgence. This Quartet would also do well to leave their trumpet playing buddy at home. Overall, though, they'd probably win over the crowd for Santana on the summer amphitheatre circuit. (SST) df

**Speedball Baby - Cinema!** No shit, much like last years ep, these guys tap

NYC noirkpunk/freakflag blues like fallout from The Voidoids/Cramps/Suicide?? Link Wray & Robert Gordon. A Loisada bug-eyed sidweays swipe at American root form that only those not actually rooted in such could construct. Kinda like The Birthday Party/80s Nick Cave, or the Black Snakes tanglin' with Chris Isaak. "I Put A Spell On You" from high chops art-strangle blues fans. Impeccable production, the clarity and precision of which eschews warmth and funky grease. It's all cool chattering teeth and refrigerator light shadows riding o'er prickly-blues referenced rock. I'll listen to this alot this year, along with the RL Burnside/Blues Explosion record 'cause I like drug/booze hysteria as long as it doesn't have an aesthetic that calls for listening to it while drinking beer and watching baseball. Much of this is straight-up rock and roll, esp. the great "Rubber Connection," "Skin Poppin' Loose" and "Dancin' With a Fever." Liberally infused, of course, with Jim Carrol/Herbert Selby Jr. lather beat hipster "I-puked-on-a-transvestite-and-he/she-tore-my-shirt-



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and-stole-my-junk" poesy.  
(Matador/PCP) cr

### Super Junky Monkey - Parastic People

Think of a quartet comprised of Japanese girls and the images usually associated with same: chinga-chinga guitars playing elementary pop, lyrics along the lines of "You like the lock and loll, yes?", extra-polite innocents who nearly always inspire usage of the adjective "cute," and so on. Okay, now forget all that and meet Super Junky Monkey, a band that defies both the female and Asian stereotypes.

Note the spelling is "junky" (as in crappy) not "Junkie." Intentional? I wonder, 'cause this foursome is definitely not super junky unless it's one of those negatives-for-a-positive slang things like "bad" or "dope." This is a polished, pro outfit with no weak links in instrumental prowess or song composition.


Musically, *Parastic People* is a mixed bag. The Chili Peppers seem to be a major Monkey influence: like Flea et al., SJM are absolutely a rock band first, but when they veer off into strong funk - notably as in the title track and "Gakai" - they pull it off without sounding forced. The difference here is that the Asian foursome is more rooted in the heavy metal than their Californian counterpart.

Of particular interest is the final cut "Tairku No Kodah," an instrumental that would be right at home on a *Before And After Science* period Eno album! Let's hope a future producer encourages them to explore this direction. From all indications Super Junky Monkey has the talent and proficiency to fill quality discs using whichever musical style they choose. (And wait until you hear their take on the Who's "See Me Feel Me") (Tristar) stately wayne manor

His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.

Mr. Chesnutt will be dead someday and the world will have to do without his terribly endearing soft country-flavored rock and softer winning rock niceness which the likes of REM and Garbage more than do justice to, but only a few should mourn his passing. Today, as I write this, marks the twentieth anniversary of Elvis Presley's death. There was

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### Sweet Relief II: Gravity Of The Situation

The situation is getting grave alright. Another tribute disc featuring the songs of yet another unappreciated "genius": Vic Chesnutt. Ok, the man is quite ill. That's terrible. But a genius? I don't think so. Here is genius:

a man who bestrode the earth like a colossus. There was a genius. Resquiat en pace far removed from the likes of Michael Basquiates. (Columbia) ds

### Thrall - Chemical Wedding

Featuring Mike Hard vocalist/lyricist, formerly of the God Bullies. Like



you're intimately familiar with the God Bullies, right?

Like now you want to know about Mike's lyrical concerns; right? Well you might, this guy thinks Jerry Garcia and Timothy Leary were recruited by the CIA for mind control experiments on the civilian population. And the music is that kind of heavy, condescending metal post-punk you can really get into if you play it loud enough. Plus you have a gruff-voiced singer who obviously hates to sing, contemptuous psychedelic guitar solos and disdainful spoken longueurs meant to function as absurdist socio-comic commentary on reality, music and Thrall's putative (i.e. you, you putz) audience. (Alternative Tentacles) ds

#### **Various Artists - The Sound Gallery**

A collection of foppish Carnaby Street doo-doo reminiscent of the soundtracks for any of a dozen or so light British sex comedies. "Oh love, I feel like a bit of fun tonight. Let us dally in nighteries where the brass is brassy, strings beguile with their honeyed meanderings, and a naughty hit of LSD is always an option. We can go in for a spot of sedate frigging at the table and after getting worked up you can roger me in the loo between courses. Oh! do not ask what it is love, let us go and abandon ourselves to the demimonde. Don your ascot, your brocade jacket, your deerstalker and cape.

I'll pop into a micro mini, a paper blouse and my white vinyl boots. No underthings. You'll like that, won't you love? Won't you love? Won't you love . . . " You too can "make the scene" with *The Sound Gallery*. If you can stomach it. (Scamp) sj & ds

#### **Various - Southern Grooves**

A down-home gas from the normally staid Charly Records. At its best, it's as nasty, greasy and funky as southern r&b gets. At its worst, it's wildly amusing. Liver mush fried in mango-scented Afro Sheen. A dollop of Pimp Oil for taste. From total unknowns trying a Stax-Volt thang - brassy horns, doo-rag rhythms, rabid emoting, neolithic melodies - and succeeding for the most part. Also assaying mellow shag nonsense and ludicrous, boll-weevil infested disco. Uh-hunh! Thas right!! A stoned soul picnic baby!!! (Charly) sj & ds

#### **Various - The Eastside Sound**

Low-riding customs packed with pompadoured Latin teens cruise Whittier Boulevard. Shrill cat-calls, wolf whistles, and assertive burnouts fill the cool night. Alluring *chicas* lift their pink skirts as they hop car to car oblivious to traffic. Roadside stands dispense tacos and burritos at an alarming clip. The Premier's raucous "Farmer John" and Cannibal's "Land of a Thousand Dances"

bruise innocent bystanders lost in the search for a decent burger and a place to park. This is east L.A. at its vibrant apogee: 1965. A world of glowering punks, pachuco couture and apotropaic cries of despair. And no tomorrow. Step inside. Don't forget the tequilla. Or the flick knife. (Telstar) sj & ds

#### **Various - Punk: Lost & Found**

Test pressings of The Damned, Eater, Billy Bragg, et al. Minor artists, incomplete but none the less individual. And it is often tyros such as these who distil balms more irritating, more acidulous, more sudorific than auteurs like The Sex Pistols and The Clash, who were truly great and truly perfect. In their confused efforts you can find the most exalted flights of sensibility, the most morbid caprices of psychology, the most imbecilic expressions of contempt shackled to melodies so immaculately banal they seem to hint at certain strange spiritual aspirations. It is, and was, punk in its purest form, a style indispensable to the decrepit milieu overseen by the insidious and bankrupt personality calling itself Thatcher. (Shanacie) ds

#### **Various - The Perfecto Compilation**

Musique for a Ru Paul soiree. The sound of late seventies disco softened with brazenly lubricious black voices and emboldened with interstellar synthesized

fragments. Tarted out, naturellment, with the occasional tumescent string rubato. The boomalay, boomalay, boom lurks despite the studied air of sobriety. Frenzy courted by rectitude. Apollo mounted delicately by Hermes who, after a few tentative thrusts, is savagely taken. Aphrodite averts her eyes. Whilst a smile plays about her face. (Reprise) ds

#### **Various - Max's Kansas City 1976**

You know what I never understood about this place? Why they had this sign next to the marquee telling the bystander they could get steaks, lobster *and* chick peas. What was up with that? Chick peas? I'm a native New Yorker. I never had trouble getting chick peas. Shit, even Goya cans the stuff. So what's the attraction of chick peas? Now if that sign had said "chick pees" that would have been a different story, right? But chick peas? Yeah, add some tahini, olive oil, cumin and lemon and you get humus. Chick peas all by their lonesome on a plate? Sure, like I'm going in a restaurant for that. Maybe if they fried them up with some onions and I was down to my last couple of bucks. Even then I'd probably go for a boiler maker . . . Chick peas! God damn chick peas! Must have been some white bread loser who first bought the club and put up that sign. Chick peas! In New York! Ah yes, certainly, now I get it: a urolagic pun. No way

that sign would have meant otherwise without the owner dying of embarrassment. Although he did let combos like Wayne County and Cherry Vanilla play there . . . Ah fuck it, let's call a spade a spade: Mr. Max, whoever he was, was retarded. (ROIR) ds

#### **Various - Rock 'n' Roll: Les Annes 60**

Les Vautours. Les Champions. Les Pirates. La creme de la creme of les pampered and pompadoured French rockers of the early sixties. The beauty of the Gauls approach is their understanding everything except the fact that their language is ineffectual for rock and roll. When you spend so much time rolling words off your tongue instead of belting them out in a forthright manner you can't help sounding like a brain-dead dilettante assaying Chuck Berry, Gene Vincent and Elvis. "I want to torment your erect brown nipples with my teeth" is great en francais, but tied to a backbeat, it don't work. Which is why even mediocre bands like Oasis end up selling millions of albums while the Stinky Toys and Telephone are consigned to oblivion. Also why burnt out cases like Mink Deville and The Cramps can continue to make a living in Paris despite the fact nobody stateside knows or cares whether they're alive or dead. Magma had it right; they were French, had no interest in learning

English, and so developed their own language. They were terrible; but understood if they released a couple of lps with snazzy covers they might possibly, just possibly, engender a cult. Unlike les aforementioned bands. The ones we began the review with. The ones you've forgotten about already. And well you should. Because they sucked. (Musicdisc) sj & ds

#### **Various - Rig Rock Deluxe**

Irritating liner notes prescribed several cups of coffee, a couple of cheeseburgers and a dozen or so spins before passing judgement on this faux-trucker extravaganza. Feeling particularly put-off by this recipe for enjoyment, we threw in two six-packs of Olympia, a half pound of Bob Evans sausage, one can of flaky Hungry Jack biscuits and a bottle of Robitussin for the sake of fairness. Also for objectivity. And guess what? This thing still blew. Mostly, anyway. Don't get us wrong here. Truck driving music is one of our holiest of holies. Dave Dudley, Red Sovine, Dick Curless, Duane Eddy, Johnny Horton, Coleman Wilson, Del Reeves, Jim 'n' Jessie, The Willis Brothers - Gods, one and all. Black-gummed, illiterate, woman-hating, gerrymander-coifed, Peter-bilt sociopaths. Unwashed, slightly dazed, inveterate snuff-dipping, pot-bellied, five-pound belt buckled, cowboy-boot clad

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Americans. But even propping up Del Reeves, Red Simpson and Buck Owens with a couple of bottles of Rebel Yell fails to save this long-haired, fairy-folk take on this manliest of genres. Bill Kirchen's soulful twang guitar adds a bit o' fun here and there but it ain't enough to make us remember to forget the numerous ass-licking homages to this, the world's greatest semi-literate art form. Desperate, chronic alcoholism and incipient insanity might have. None of which is in evidence here. (Upstart) sj & ds

**Various - Ultra Lounge**  
The second six cd installment is not nearly the gas the first one was but it does have two "must" purchases. The first, endearingly titled *The Crime Scene*, is a sexycool mix of sleazy diversifications like "Harlem Nocturne" and "Big Town," masculine assaults a la "The Untouchables" and "James Bond Theme" and burlesques in the form of a "Peter Gunn" suite and other fatuous tv thriller ephemera. The second, *Organs in Orbit*, is so weird it almost defies description. And belief. This is the quintessence of lounge, baby. Lewd, lewder and lewdest. Red banquettes and smokey atmosphere. A place by the airport. A retreat where romance and melody is gutted on the altar of lust, dancers brazenly engage in acts of frottage and hard drinking is feted. In this

room the women come and go, speaking of Fra Angelico. (Capitol) ds

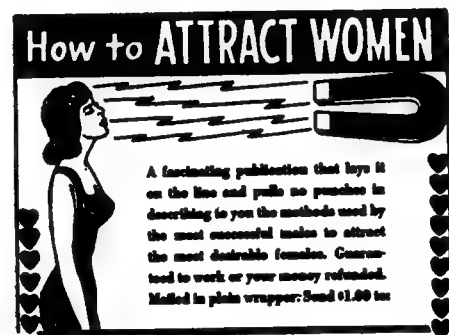
### **The Volcanos - Surf Quake**

Yes, it's surf. A very winsome, laid back kind of surf - of the instro variety of course. The things we could tell you about surf - historical things, important things, big things. If we felt like it. But we don't. It's a nice day and we are drinking and listening to this very winsome, laid back kind of surf record. An excellent surf record with alot of those excellent kinds of surf moments that we live for. A record, in fact, that is growing on us by the minute. Every minute. Still, we have so many other things to tell you. We just don't know where to start . . . (Estrus) sj & ds

### **Dennis Warren's Full Metal Revolutionary Jazz Ensemble - Watch Out**

Here we have the real deal. Jazz that's outside and that swings. Formed in 1987 by Dennis Warren, an all-over-the-place drummer, and trumpet great Raphe Malik, both of whom studied under Cecil Taylor at Antioch College in 1971, the FMRJE harken back to the early to mid-seventies when jazz was adventuresome and dangerous. Think Ayler, Hemphill, Shepp (before he wanted to be a singer), Ted Curson, Frank Lowe, Rev. Frank Wright, Noah Howard, Sonny Simmons, and on and on. This is the true spirit of the art, not the clinical,

academic bullshit foisted upon the masses by a bunch of techno-weenies with all the chops and none of the soul. You know who I'm talking about. If Trane were alive today, I'd like to believe that he would heartily approve of these guys; then again, he might be doing that awful pop crap that Miles ended up drowning in. But I don't think so. Warren studied under Milford Graves, the legendary drummer/shaman who still lives in Brooklyn and occasionally gigs around town. If you have any interest at all in jazz as creative form and not as an excuse to dress up like Mr. Davis and spew licks from *So What*, you need to hear this disc. It will hip you to another world of American music. Unless you're there already. (Accurate Records thru DNA, Box 390115, Cambridge, MA 02139) The Pope





## The Stupefaction - Diane Williams (Knopf)

However comfortable you may be with the avant-garde, you're probably not too cool to admit you wouldn't know a modern-day *Ulysses* if it bit you. Diane Williams' new experimental work attempts something far more rude. Seconds into this strange assemblage of short fiction, the reader is hit with the sort of large-scale, uncensored sexual imagery that has become an international code for artistic subversion. With most stories in *The Stupefaction* running no longer than a page and a half, word-wrangling edges out plot. Ms. Williams jiggles her phrases out of their narrative contexts, then reassembles them using the introspective glues of rhythm and pitch. She's great with cryptic openers, like "In a fussy mood, she came home to me" and "We are all so much the same - our size, our shapes, and we are perforated." But because Ms. Williams' leitmotif is female sexual passivity, the mood is more bitter than antic. And try as you might to separate her technical innovations from the increasingly conventional language of creative risk - bluntness, profanity, victimization - more often than not it's the odiferous words that stick. (Sally Eckhoff)



## The House That Jack Built - Graham Masterton (Carroll & Graf)

Although often compared to Edgar Allan Poe, the prose of the author of such bestselling novels as *The Manitou* and *Burial* is far too artless to bear the burden of such an association. Masterton is, however, an adept storyteller as well as a highly original thinker, and in this, his latest work, he succeeds in bringing something fresh and inventive to the haunted house novel. The spooky manse here is Valhalla, a decaying Gothic estate in a remote corner of the Hudson Valley which Craig Bellman a successful, if rather ruthless New York lawyer, means to restore. Never mind that he doesn't have the money, his wife Effie has severe misgivings, and Valhalla possesses a gruesome history. Or that it's builder, Jack Belias, a miscreant of the first order, disappeared under mysterious circumstances. And every owner since has met a terribly tragic end. Craig is undaunted. Sexually maimed in a mugging a few months earlier and now impotent; he sees the restoration of the almost hopelessly dilapidated estate as a means to reestablishing his masculinity and to rescuing his marriage to Effie. The conventions of the tale in place, Mr. Masterton turns things on their head by mixing the catastrophic with the unsettling while

slowly and effectively establishing a marvelous conceit for the hauntings. Though the characters are somewhat one dimensional, the story is genuinely disturbing; one is constantly thrown off balance with surprising plot twists, nightmarishly gruesome set pieces and a disquieting, almost arrhythmic pace. (Dominick Salemi)

## Le Cinema du Sleaze

The reluctant critical enthusiasm for the surge of interest in badfilm has, somewhat ironically, failed to halt the recent avalanche of publication of books and guides devoted to the subject. Unfortunately, most of these tomes, while well researched and attractively packaged, are marred by poor writing and intellectual poverty. Titles like *Races, Chases & Crashes - A Complete Guide to Car Movies and Biker Flicks* and *The Films Of Jayne Mansfield* promise endless hours of pleasure but fail to deliver. A shame, really, as almost anyone who has stayed up until two a.m. to catch a wretched piece of cinema like "Blast Of Silence" or "Who Killed Teddy Bear" knows, trash offers its own rewards: implausible plots, amateurish acting, impoverished mise en scene, sophomoric cinematography, inept direction, an almost total absence of theme or idea. Still, if one is willing to haunt the local Tower or alternative bookstore,

provocative and penetrating studies on the subject can be found. What follows is a brief overview of some of the more interesting tomes to have hit the shelves in recent months.

*Japanese Cinema - The Essential Handbook* (Vital Books) - An accurate description. A look at the best and worst in Japanese film and everything in between. From Kurosawa to the indefensible "Rapeman" series. Tom Weisser's literary sensibility (he taught English at the University of Miami), deranged taste and most of all, unerring sense of humor, make this a most enjoyable read. Profusely illustrated, exhaustively indexed and gratuitously appendicized with an examination of "The Baby Cart" phenomenon by erstwhile polymath Max Allan Collins "essential" doesn't begin to describe this quiet and unassuming work.

*Psychotronic Encyclopedia* (Ballantine) - Defies criticism as it refuses to take a critical approach to the thousands of primarily marginal films synopsized. One is either "with it" or one is not. Either one lives in a world where it's always a few hours before dawn or one does not. Either one smokes a lot of dope or one does not. Either one seeks the epiphanic or mindlessly perambulates in a netherworld where hope is a dirty word and beauty an impossibility. Animadversions aside, this is *the*

book you have to have sitting atop your television. Especially if your idea of a good time is channel surfing in the wee hours of the morning.

*Va Va Voom* (Rhino) - An in-depth look at the talentless ecdysiasts, pin-ups, and lubricious actresses of the Fifties. I.E. long legged, pneumatic young women with hourglass figures. None of whom, with the possible exception of Marilyn Monroe and Bettie Page, are worth talking about. Author Steve Sullivan, however, manages the neat trick of making all his subjects "appear" to be worth talking about and, in the case of the lovely causeries on Jayne Mansfield and Mamie Van Doren, generates so much enthusiasm the reader is likely to find himself bewildered as to his indifference toward such cinematic landmarks as "The Navy vs. The Night Monsters" and "The Loves Of Hercules." Maybe not. Profusely illustrated for the chronic masturbator.

*Fragments of Fear* (Creation) - The British, possessed by an absurd fear of visual expressions of the morbid, have nevertheless managed to produce a substantial number of quirky and puissant horror exercises. Many of them, with the exception of the product released by Hammer Studios, unjustly relegated to the dustbin of cinematic history. *Fragments* seeks to redress

this while giving the reader a rather extensive overview of the "whole range" of British horror. Andy Boot, the madman behind this project, looks at the genre, unlike polymath Phil Hardy, not as art but as entertainment and because he does, never loses sight of the fact that in writing about these questionable projects, the primary goal is to generate enthusiasm. Which Andy does, once he pulls himself out of the quagmire of the early years, a best forgotten time when Tod Slaughter held sway and the Boris Karloff vehicle, "The Ghoul" was the supreme achievement. For genre completists, the chapters of Tigon and Amicus, will come as a revelation (at least until Phil Nutman unleashes his long-awaited study).

*Cult Flicks and Trash Pics* (Visible Ink) - If one could somehow get the Video Hound and Michael Weldon together one might end up with the Diderot Encyclopedia of sleaze cinema. In other words, if we could wed Mr. Weldon's enthusiasm with Mr. Hound's Platonism one could produce an aesthetic guide to trash (like *Brutarian*). Which this compendium attempts to pass itself off as but, in the final analysis, fails as it's staff suffers from a surfeit of good taste and even better breeding. Bemused indifference not aesthetic rigor is the proper approach to "The Incredible Two-Headed Transplant" After all, "Splatter University" is

not a work with aspirations toward art. As an inchoate vision of a severely limited sensibility saddled with a pathetically compulsive need to express itself how could it be? Still, an intelligent, well-written approach to fringe filmmaking is a welcome anodyne to the de rigueur sensibility passing itself off as analysis. Even if the publishers' idea of "cult" film excludes such masterpieces as "If . . ." "The Cook, The Thief, The Wife and Her Lover" and "The Lady From Shanghai" (to name just a few dozen).

*The Illustrated Who's Who Of Hollywood Directors* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux) - Inclusion is merited by dint of work primarily in Hollywood in sound - although not programmers or drive-in fare - and a career firmly established by 1975. Only a curmudgeon would complain: one hundred and fifty Hollywood directors whose films are still watched. "Enduring" is the key word here." As it should be. Shakespeare's greatness is measured after all by the fact that he is still played. Bemoan the absence of Ed Wood and H.G. Lewis. Celebrate the succinct and thoughtful exegeses on Edgar G. Ulmer ("the supreme stylist of the B") and William Castle ("a unique (if modest) contribution to the American cinema"), sing nonsense propagated as oeuvre, debate the merits of a theory which asks us to consider Orson Welles and



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Herbert Ross in the same breath. Heresy? Would a study of 20th Century writers have us examine and compare the work of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Sidney Sheldon?

*Grindhouse - The Forbidden World Of 'Adults Only' Cinema* (St. Martins) - A breezy, mercifully brief and highly entertaining history of a largely ignored cinematic genre: the contemptible, nightmarish dream kingdom otherwise known as exploitation. AKA dirt. The only word, really for such inconsequential trash. Capitalist expressionism displayed and paraded in a forum where emotionally damaged visions found expression in infantile tropes and pedestrian cinematography. A burial ground where priapism and revulsion sought common ground with greed, profit danced on the corpse of art, and cupidity reviled beauty. Indeed, tis a book more concerned with man's pursuit of money than with the merits or failings of the films themselves. Thus, the liberal decoration of the history with posters, lobby cards and newspaper advertisements; inducements to buy far more artful and clever, in the final analysis, than most of the products churned out by these shameless entrepreneurs. (Dominick Salemi)

## Edgeworks I - Harlan Ellison (White Wolf)

No one has ever accused Harlan Ellison of being shy about expressing his opinions. Whether or not you've ever read one of his stories, chances are you've seen something born of his typewriter. Remember a touching little film called *A Boy and His Dog*? How about the *Star Trek* episode "City on the Edge of Forever"? Did you watch the *Twilight Zone* series of the late 80s? Have you ever seen an episode of *Babylon 5*? Trust me, if you missed all of these, you've still probably encountered Harlan Ellison's work somewhere, at some time.

If you're a Republican, a Fundamentalist, a member of the Flat Earth Society, or a Hollywood "insider," it's a foregone conclusion you're not likely to take to the man's work. And, on the other hand, even if you like modern horror movies or TV sitcoms, or books about mass murderers, you're probably more than likely to be abashed by both Harlan's politics and his aesthetics.

Wherever you're coming from however, you'd have to conclude, after reading almost anything Mr. Ellison has produced, that the man can write.

The first volume in the omnibus series *White Wolf* has begun publishing contains the contents of

two previously released books: *Over the Edge*, an early short story/essay collection (with a few editions substituting for some of the original pieces) and *An Edge in My Voice* a collection of Ellison's long-running media column from the *L.A. Weekly* and the (now defunct) magazine *Future Life*.

The classic "Pennies off a Dead Man's Eyes," which lightly explores racism and "human" ties, still moves despite the dating of some of its details. "Ernest and the God Machine," about the fateful meeting of two people with extraordinary powers, retains all the bizarre charm it had more than 25 years ago. "Shadowplay," "Blind Lightning" and "Rock God" are still here; but a number of classic tales have made way for some of Ellison's, shall we say, more . . . obscure pieces.

Like "The End of the Time of Leinard" a straight Western examining the trouble a small town faces when the gunslinger it hired to clean up the place refuses to leave. And the so-called "Men's Magazine" stories: "From a Great Height," a fitfully interesting tale in which an amoral climber looking to make a few extra bucks by agreeing to murder his student's spouse finds the tables turned when he gets too greedy; and the laughably macho "Walk the High Steel" which is much ado about nothing.

The essay "Three Faces of Fear," with its outrage and confusion over the appalling appeal of splatter films, remains timely. Two additional essays - "The Words in Spock's Mouth," a musing on those unsung heroes, the writers behind the dialogue, and "Xenogenesis," a lengthy excursus on the crap that authors have visited on them by obsessive and obnoxious fans - are penetrating and amusing.

The columns, dealing with 80s concerns, hold up surprisingly well, which just goes to show that neither Hollywood, nor the publishing industry, are as creative or clever as they'd like to think. In a plainspoken "justification" in one of the early installments, Ellison explains his seemingly hateful attitude:

Some have said I have good taste, high standards, a sense of what is worthy. Others have disagreed. I cannot espouse the taste of others, only my own. But I'm told it is that special view which is required here. I seldom agree with the mass, I despise bad writing, meretricious filmmaking, appeals to the lowest common denominator of cheap titillation, attempts to package snake-oil as a cancer cure, and I reject the notion that you are a vast audience of dumb, gullible children who will endorse even the shabbiest product if it comes heavily advertised.

As a "self-appointed mad dog yapping at the heels" of politicians, powerbrokers, self-appointed pundits, and hypocrites (like Jerry Falwell - "God's Own Pillsbury Doughboy"), Ellison is never shy about taking a stand. Nobody rants like Harlan - but it's a rant of concern, a wake-up

(Charlene L. Brusso)

## Zombie - Joyce Carol Oates (Dutton)

The synapses are crossed. Sanity cannot hold. Does not hold. Friends, family, strangers. Taunting and following thirty-year old

crude, unnerving illustrations. Of nothing. And everything. Portrait of the artist as an inchoate psychopath. (Dominick Salemi)

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call. No matter how incendiary his invective gets - and it gets pretty hot at times - underneath there's a burning idealism, a rebel's refusal to accept the status quo, a need to reach for something better. "Be uncomfortable; be sand, not oil, in the machinery of the world," he says, quoting German poet Gunter Eich. While Harlan, may indeed make us uncomfortable at times, he often forces us to think, to question our assumptions. And that makes all the difference.

Quentin P. In his head. And in this head, the idea of making a zombie takes hold. Young teenage boys lobotomized by ice picks to the frontal lobes. So there is "nothing inside them *seeing*. & nothing behind them *thinking*. Nothing *passing judgment*." Jeffrey Dahmer as a "numb tongue" nevertheless allowed to speak to us in what is, essentially, an extended monologue. A recitation, comic, horrifying and somehow, somehow, moving. Accompanied by

## Please Kill Me: The Uncensored Oral History of Punk - Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain (Grove Press)

The look and sound of punk rock rose out of the gutters of New York, rooted firmly in girl-group pop, R & B, surf music, garage rock, and even 19th Century poetry, as a reaction to the bloated dreck of the day. That punk rock is most remembered for its later transformation into cynical

media manipulation by English jizzmoppers is unfortunate.

For *Please Kill Me*, McNeil and McCain have assembled an unbalanced, but enjoyable account of punk (in the narrowest sense imaginable) and its forefathers, as told by those responsible, their friends, associates, and assorted hangers on, with an emphasis on bands that played regularly at CBGB's in New York in the mid-70s. The interviews wallow in trashy gossip - the authors rarely discuss the music. But all the tawdry details about who fucked and sucked what, what drugs so-and-so took, who ripped off whom, etc., are recounted vividly.

The book begins with tales of the Velvet Underground, Stooges, the MC5 and the New York Dolls, bands who embodied punk's attitude before punk became hip. From there, *Kill Me* moves on to Patti Smith, the Dictators, the Ramones, Television, Richard Hell and the Voidoids, Blondie, the Heartbreakers, and the Dead Boys. Also recounted are several of the more legendary incidents of the era, such as the time Wayne County clubbed Handsome Dick Manitoba with a mike stand and the night the Dead Boys' Johnny Blitz was stabbed nearly to death outside CBGB's.

We also learn that the Velvets were untrustworthy

scam artists; Iggy Pop was an out-of-control dope fiend who often couldn't stand up for gigs; many of New York's innovators, notably Dee Dee Ramone and Richard Lloyd, turned tricks to support their heroin habits; the spiked hair and torn t-shirts that became all the rage in England in 1977 were the product of Richard Hell's misplaced fashion sense; and that the Heartbreakers supposedly turned many English punks on to heroin. However, in tilting their story so much toward New York, McNeil and McCain have short-changed England's later contributions to punk rock, most notably by the Pistols and the Clash.

So *Please Kill Me* is hardly complete and by no means definitive. A lot of it is outright crap. But it's entertaining crap and a must for the bathrooms of the informed. (Dirk Fubar)

### **The Mortal Nuts - Pete Hautman (Simon & Schuster)**

Septuagenarian taco maven Axel Speeter has a problem. Someone is after the \$260,000 he has stashed in the Motel 6 where he lives. Axel doesn't know that. Neither does Sophie Roman, Axel's erstwhile girlfriend and manager of his little bean stand. Sophie's brain dead, valium addicted daughter Carmen does though. And Carmen's told her homicidal skinhead boyfriend James

Dean about it. Told him they can break in and take the green while Axel's working the Minnesota State Fair with her mother. Of course this may prove to be a wee bit difficult as Carmen too is slated to labor at the taco stand and Axel, who looks at Carmen as the daughter he's never had, has ensconced her in a room adjoining his own. The boyfriend Dean, is impatient. He's just murdered his sister back in Omaha and wants to hightail it to Mexico. He can't do that without money. Lots of money. Axel's money. While we wait for Dean to blow, Hautman introduces us to half a dozen or so memorable characters, throws in several seemingly incongruous plot twists and plies us with a wit that is by turns mordant, vulgar and surreal. (Dominick Salemi)

### **Amok Journal - ed. Stuart Swezey (Amok Books)**

Holy Mary Mother of God but is this ever a book! A real no fooling around book. A jam-full-of-some-of-the-weirdest-stuff-you'll-ever-run-across kind of a book. Real shit. All too real in fact.

Right up front, on the copyright page fer chrissakes, they advise you in bold type:

**WARNING: Do not attempt any of the body modifications or sexual practices described herein.**



*If you feel compelled to attempt any hazardous practice described herein, please contact a professional therapist for proper treatment. Neither the contributors, the editor, nor the publishers will assume responsibility for the use or misuse of any information contained within this book.*

Hmm . . . did somebody say body modifications? Modifications? Oh yeah, they sure the hell did. And they meant it. Don't do it!

Whatta ya say we take a sample of headings straight off the damn table of contents, ok?

Vacuum Cleaner Use in Autoerotic Death  
Autoerotic Fatalities with Power Hydraulics  
Stone Age Skull Surgery  
Cannibalism for Cargo  
Total Autoemasculation  
Ocular Auto-Enucleation  
While Under the Influence of Drugs  
Scrotum Self-Repair  
Rectal Impaction Following Enema with Concrete Mix

Cool, huh?

Take note, if you please, of the scientific tone of those content headers. That's because a whole of this garden of unearthly delights is excerpted straight out of the professional journals the material first appeared in. This is the real McCoy, folks. Despite the thickness and density of the prose contained in some of these pieces, the weight of authority keeps you

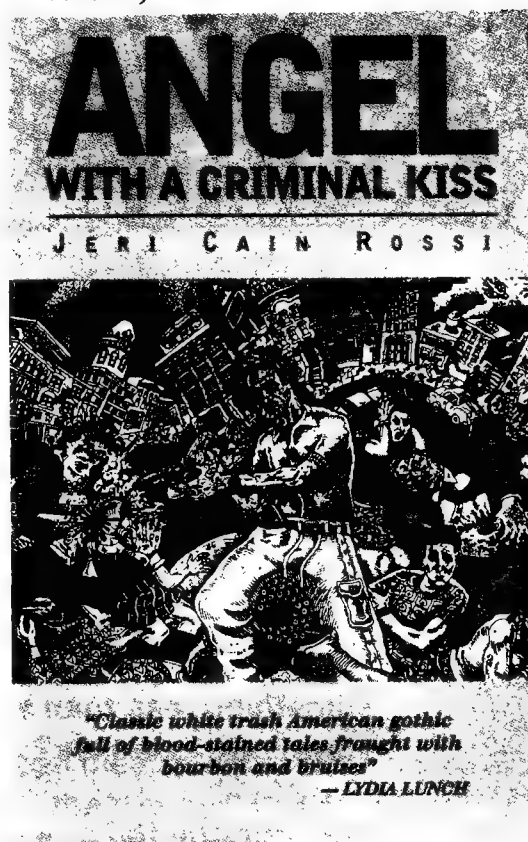
reading. This is NOT some Edgar Allan Poe fictional fright night. But it just might be the guy next door. Take note also, of the self-referential tone of those headers. That's what makes this all so fascinating. After all, any old body can inflict horrible consequences on their fellow man. It takes a real major leaguer however, to do it to one's self. And these people certainly can be said to "do it" to themselves. Do they ever. HooWEE, do they ever.

I could go on and on with what's in this "journal." The ping pong ball in the concrete that hardened up inside of some drongo's ass. The lady who drilled a hole in her own head and filmed the procedure. The idiots who choked themselves while choking their chickens. The cretin who got his prick caught in the drive belt of the running machinery. The imbecile who was found dead, stark naked (except for the chain harness wound around the axle), crushed against the rear fender of his still running Volkswagen.

There's plenty more. But I'm not gonna bore you with all the details. Nor spoil any of the wonderful - and often bowel-emptying - surprises.

This is a big, thick compendium. Fulla zillions of words and a sprinkling of black and white photos. Some parts amaze, some parts stupify, and some parts will set your teeth on edge. Plan on having

strange, very strange dreams after reading this motherfucker. (James MacLaren)



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Lately Ozzy has been getting so many letters expressing confusion over his rating system that he's decided to dispense with stories detailing his hair-raising exploits trolling the singles scene and instead to elucidate the madness at the heart of Six Pack Theatre.

Of course it's easy enough discerning a full six pack as the highest rating and anything less as denoting a product of something less than sterling quality; but why beer? Why not stars? Or asterixes? Or penises as in *Hustler*?

Well, for one thing, we're promoting alcoholism. George Bernard Shaw once said if you can imagine that everybody is strong enough to endure life without an anaesthetic, then you can never understand why men drink. Ozzy would add that it's virtually impossible, not to mention impracticable, to watch something as arousing, and beautiful as, oh say, *The Cook, The Thief, The Wife and Her Lover*, without quaffing at least six brews.

Ah, but that's an art house film, you say. Why not toast it with libation like champagne. Because despite its pretensions, it's really a drive in movie: surreal sets, depraved behavior, hot sex, and gratuitous violence. Stylishly done, yes, though to what end? For what purpose? To amaze and titillate naturellment. Only incidentally, despite the auteur's protestations, to provoke thought. So, we raise our glasses high in a fever of anticipation . . . and drink. Cheap beer. And if we find ourselves becoming sudoriparous we continue to drink. Ozzy has concluded, after much careful study, that the normal alcoholic sleaze maven can, in a state of dionysian frenzy, down about six beers in an hour and a half of viewing time. A rate higher than this results in derangement of the

senses and an almost total incapacitating of the critical faculties. Six beers in ninety minutes though is enough to calm the soul and still provoke the id.

Perhaps Oz is not making himself clear. What he's trying to say, in his own semi-literate way, is this: a great, nasty, mindless flick will move one to drink. But in a systematic way. You don't want to miss a minute, yet you want the experience enhanced. Which is impossible if you're drunk on your ass. Or merely mildly intoxicated. As most movies are miserable or, at best tolerable affairs, however; you're going to slow down. The desire to consume mass quantities will abate. Your body stops producing adrenalin, the mind begins to wander, and, unless you're a chronic alcoholic, you're not going to feel the need to continue to fuel the machine. If this state comes relatively late in the screening, a film will get five cans; if in the first reel, one or no cans. All of this calibrated to a ninety minute gauge. Most flicks run longer, I know; Ozzy though, being the genius that he is, adjusts accordingly.

So, there it is. Hopefully, Ozzy has made it all clear to you. If not, write the folks at *Film Threat* magazine, they've purloined Ozzy's system and have not so cleverly attempted to disguise the thievery by turning beers into shots. Oz empathizes. Poor thinkers imitate, highly original ones steal.

Oh yes, you might notice that there are relatively fewer reviews this time. And the fact that many of them were not screened at your local multiplex. Well, that's because Ozzy and *Brutarian* have finally come to the realization that we just don't have the time nor the space to review every exploitation flick foisted upon the tired, poor and huddled masses. And since most of them suck what's the point in wasting your time. You've already made up your mind about *Mars Attacks*. Probably seen it several times. Do you really care what Oz has to say about it? Well, maybe but Mr. Fide is tired of having to trudge to the local cineplex two or three times a week to see the latest in uninspired potboilers. Better to take a chance on something that hasn't been pieced together by a bunch of suits sitting around a big table in a Manhattan skyscraper. Besides, you're far more likely to strike up a conversation with a gullible Jane at *City Of Lost Children* than at *Terminator VII: The Quickening*. Read on, what follows is important . . .

**Island of Dr. Moreau -  
(d) John Frankenheimer**

A mindless exercise in tedium made bearable by the ridiculously eccentric performances of Marlon Brando and Val Kilmer and the marvelous monsters of special effects wizard Stan Winston. However, there's no story, little plotting, and absolutely no point to any of this. A poor schmiel's plane goes down and he winds up on an island where a mad doctor and his equally nutty assistant are working night and day to transmogrify animals into humans. Alright, now what? Now we spend the rest of the movie talking. About absolutely nothing. Until it's time for the poor man-beasts to revolt and blow everything up. Senescent director Frankenheimer, laboring under the delusion he's filming Shelly's *Manfred*, invests the proceedings with a somber, stately air stretching lifeless sequences beyond the point of endurance and cutting away whenever the grotesqueries become too "obtrusive." For some, the sight of the four hundred plus pounds of Brando sporting white Kabuki make-up and red lipstick may be grotesquery enough but it's the only thing truly horrifying in this vapid and rather uneventful flick.



**First Strike aka Police  
Story 4 - (d) Wu Flun  
Dung**

If you thought the cartoonish *Rumble In The Bronx* was a gas wait until you get a load of this. Here we have Jackie Chan working James bond territory as a Hong Kong policeman aiding the FBI and the KGB in an attempt to thwart a disgruntled CIA turncoat from selling a nuclear device to a nefarious underworld operation. What poor Jackie doesn't know is that renegade agents from the KGB and the CIA are also interested in acquiring the bomb and so while they're perfectly happy, tho have our hero and their fellow operatives track down the nuke for them they can't let Jackie and said operatives get too close. Confused? So is Jackie. It doesn't matter. We don't watch Jackie Chan movies for the story. We watch them for the fights and the spectacular stunts. Of which there are far too many, as usual, to mention here. There are three mind-boggling sequences which I feel I must bring to your attention however. The first involves Jackie, on the run from a horde of bad guys, flying down an impossibly steep mountain aboard a snowmobile which he eventually ditches for a snowboard. The second has Jackie, armed only with a ladder, standing off a horde of bad guys in a shark tank. Sharks! Real sharks! No backscreen projection for Jackie in many of these scenes. No mechanical rubber fish. God! How does this guy keep from killing himself?

Wait . . . Maybe Jackie is actually . . . Naaaah . . .



**La Haine (Hate)**

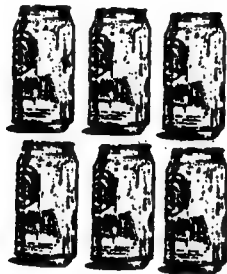
-(d) Mathieu Kassovitz  
In France, Mr Kassovitz's *Hate* is the most renowned and commercially successful work in a nascent genre known as "banlieue" a shorthand way of referring to films set amidst the violent, impoverished interracial housing projects on the outskirts of Paris. Before arriving on American shores earlier this year, the movie won the Cannes Best Director prize, a European film critics Felix award for Best New Filmmaker and the French Caesar for Best Film. And it wouldn't surprise Ozzy any if come March of 1997 *Hate* received an Academy nomination for Best Foreign Picture. The film is that good.

*Hate* tracks a day in the lives of three delinquents - an Arab, a Black and a Jew - following a riot with the police. We know this is not going to be a typical twenty-four hours as every scene is prefaced by the time. And as one of the three young men has come into possession of a cop's Smith & Wesson, lost the day before in the brouhaha. The gun is a symbol of oppression. It must come

into play. The Jew (quelle irony) wants to use it. The Black preaches caution. The Arab is torn. There is much talking. But as our anti-heroes wander aimlessly about the blasted landscape chattering incessantly, a strange thing happens: we get pulled in. We start to care. These guys are funny; and they're full of energy (misdirected as a lot of it is) despite living in something very close to hell. In fact, you can see it from where they live.



It's called Paris. A sterile place filled with brutal cops, unfeeling dilettantes, fey, homicidal drug dealers and alienated bourgeoisie. No way out. No where to go. No future. And France and Europe, and indeed, all of us, are dreaming.



**The Stendhal Syndrome**  
- (d) Dario Argento  
Italian director Dario Argento is responsible for some of the greatest horror films ever committed to celluloid. But not lately. Argento's last effort, *Trauma*, was, despite the

presence of Piper Laurie and Frederick Forest, rather uninvolved and poorly plotted. *The Stendhal Syndrome* is also saddled with an incoherent narrative but at least Argento the scriptwriter stops every now and then to have his characters explain what the hell is going on. In a nutshell, *Stendhal* is the story of a serial rapist and the beautiful young police detective (Dario's daughter) who comes to assume the sexual degenerate's identity after being twice assaulted by him. Which will come as no big surprise to the viewer as both victim and victimizer are afflicted with the eponymous psychological dysfunction.

An extreme cathexis of sorts which results whenever a viewer finds himself too simpatico with a sculpture or a painting. Sounds like dilettantish affection to Ozzy. Anyhoo, there are few of the gory shocks Argento has built his reputation on and the nauseating rapes are pure gratuity. Still, Dario works up a few scares, does a nice job with his set design, filling much of it with surreal and arresting graffiti styled art, and manages a few bravura oner sequences.



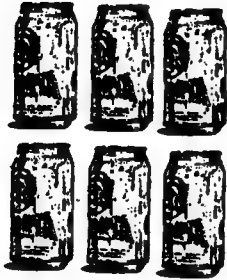
**I Shot Andy Warhol** - (d) Mary Harron  
So said talentless feminist psychopath, Valerie Solanas, to the cops after putting a few bullets in the

most famous hack artist of our time. Tyro director Mary Harron plays most of this for laughs while managing the neat trick of getting an incendiary performance from Lili Taylor (*Dogfight*, a film that needs to be revived) and a droll, witty turn from Jared Harris as the fey, pop-art prince. In fact, almost everyone involved provide remarkable characterizations: Stephen Dorff's Candy Darling radiates sweetness and light; Lothaire Bluteau's Maruice Girodias (Olympia Press publisher) oozes oleaginous charm; and Michael Imperioli's Ondine gives new meaning to the term passive-aggressive.

Still, it's Ms. Taylor's show. Her slow descent into madness as she seeks to make her mark among the diffident denizens of Warhol's Factory is a marvelously restrained performance. A lesser actress would have overplayed; Taylor keeps things in check, allowing us to empathize with the frustrated artist at the heart of the character.

Borrowing liberally from New Wave techniques, Harron trenchantly filigree her narrative with interviews with Solanas' shrink, grainy home movies, monologues from Solanas' *SCUM* (Society for Cutting Up Men) *Manifesto*, and fumbled readings from "Up Your Ass," the scatological play Warhol refused to produce. The result isn't so much

cinema verite as most critics would have you believe but rather a surreal and somewhat ironic counterpoint to what is essentially a morality tale about the blind seeking acceptance from the blind.



#### **Bound - (d) Larry & Andy Wachowski**

Ah yes, Ozzy's favorite genre: lesbian noir. Just don't ask him to name other films in the school. Jennifer Tilly (an Oscar nominee for *Bullets Over Broadway*) and Gina Gershon (two of the breasts in the execrable but risible *Showgirls*) co-star as two oversexed women who fall in lust and decide to rip off the mob to the tune of 2.176 million dollars. We're supposed to believe the steamy pair can get away with it because Jennifer's boyfriend, a savvy mob underling named Caesar (Joe Pantoliano who steals every scene he's in) isn't savvy enough to deduce Jennifer could fall for Gina. Like it's possible for anyone to resist the lithe, pouty, ophidian Gershon. Ozzy would sell his mother to a white slaver for ten minutes alone with her. Or for twenty minutes on the phone. If you can get wrap your small brain around this conceit however you'll have loads of fun

watching Gershon and Tilly play with each other, Sicilians making fools of themselves and blood flowing like Chianti. The Wachowski Brothers also manage to generate a fair amount of suspense and plenty of laughs once things kick into high gear. If there's a weakness in *Bound*, it's in Tilly's one-note performance; she's incapable of projecting anything other than unbridled, addled sexuality. Which you'll hardly notice as you'll be in a constant state of anticipation waiting for Tilly to fall out of all the skin-tight outfits she's made to wear.



#### **Scream - (d) Wes Craven**

Realizing it's almost impossible to scare anyone in this day and age, Craven has taken to satirizing himself. The last installment in the *Nightmare On Elm Street* series was an agreeable parody and this, Craven's latest effort, while not the horror classic critics are labeling it, is loads of fun. If you're idea of fun is watching people get diced and sliced that is. Still, this genre exercise which has a madman stalking a lithesome teenage girl (Courtney Cox) on the anniversary of her mother's rape and murder, is nicely plotted, features endearingly hammy performances (Henry Winkler and Drew Barrymore in bit parts are particularly amusing) and

comes replete with comic allusions to classic fright flicks of recent vintage. There's also some genuinely frightening scenes, a story that keeps you guessing as to the identity of the killer, and a cockamamie denouement that will have you rolling in the aisles with laughter. Hey, wait a minute, a slasher movie with thrills, chills, laughter and a madman dressed like the figure in Edward Munch's *The Scream*? Maybe this is a classic. Time will tell; but Ozzy, hedging his bets, gives this



#### **Small Gauge Shotgun**

Two independent filmmakers share the stage on this ninety minute compilation. Acerbic comic auteur and *Motorbooty* publisher Danny Plotnick is the better known and while his four contributions have their moments (especially the acidulous "Pillow Talk" which finds a punkette slowly being driven mad by her loutish neighbors) but it's Sikora's work which holds up better. "Love After The Walls Close In" perfectly captures the sleazy poetic quality of the Bukowski short story "Reunion" while "Terminal Hotel" and "Stagefright Chameleon" two arresting shorts rely on moody industrial sounds, disturbing imagery, clever editing and adroit cinematography to affect, in



each case, a haunting, grainy nightmare. (Peeling Eyeball, Box 460472, San Francisco, CA 94146).



**City Of Lost Children - (d) Jeunet & Caro**

Normally, Ozzy wouldn't waste your time telling you about a dreadful foreign film but as you're likely to find all your hip friends telling you how you just have to catch this marvelous French fantasy flick we'd thought we'd warn you ahead of time not to waste your rental money. Yes, this was made by the same cretins who slapped together the woefully overrated *Delicatessen*.

And yes, this does contain marvelous set design - sort of a sepia toned, futuristic, docks-of-Marseilles thing - but the plotting is abysmal, the story uninvolving (mad scientist kidnapping children to steal their dreams) and the pacing snail-like. Couple this with an almost total absence of theme, meaningful content, and arresting mise-en-scene and you have your typical celebrated French film, i.e. much ado about nothing.

**The Relic - (d) Peter Hyams**

Granted, you don't have much to work with when you're given a script which has a monster stalking a bunch of morons in a museum; but give Ozzy a couple of million and he would have had the good



God damn, mama must be cookin' up another batch of shit house rat!

sense to make it, at the very least, watchable. How? Well, first of all, you light things so the audience can see what's going on. Then you make sure what your paying customers *see* is gradually escalating violence (each kill becoming more profoundly disturbing and gruesome than that which proceeds it), lots of female and male nudity (we want women to come see our film too), kinky sex, contemptuous dialogue (none of this "there-has-to-be-a rationale explanation" badinage), fucked-up characters (for instance, make one of the males a panty-sniffing voyeur and one of the females an anal retentive ball-buster sporting a butt plug), and scenes in which the mayhem or any of the false

alarms are never, ever telegraphed. Okay? Alright, maybe this is not the recipe for an instant classic but I'd be willing to bet you dollars to doughnuts that if you'd follow Ozzy's formula you'd have theater patrons rocking and rolling in the aisles. As opposed to what Mr Fide witnessed on the opening night premiere of this disaster at his local multiplex: chanted obscenities, public urination, and the launching of half-filled cans of Schlitz malt-liquor at the screen.

**Heidi Fleiss: Hollywood Madam - BBC**

Portrait of a loser and a wonderful argument for the legalization of prostitution.





# PAPAL BULL

By the  
Pope

Well, yes, the Pope has returned from the wasteland, the arid, dry, unforgiving wilderness. After searching for salvation through degradation He has rejoined Dom Salemi in his quest for enlightenment. Never again will He stray from His task. The one chosen for Him. By Him. Oh well . . .

The Pope's old friends at **CADENCE** magazine and mail order service have embarked on a truly heroic endeavor: the recording of some of the most overlooked jazz players around. Under the CIMP imprint they have released about twenty CDs by such luminaries as the legendary Joe McPhee, Evan Parer, and the truly great Sonny Simmons, who has been homeless off and on for the last fifteen years or so. Brand new recordings of some fine but difficult music you need to hear. Frank Lowe is also on their roster. Start with the terrific sampler that contains tracks from the

first fifteen discs. All available from Cadence, The Cadence Building, Redwood, New York 13679. If you're interested in "outside" jazz, do yourself a favor and give the people here a call. And ask for Slim. She knows all . . . Anybody remember the Paul Butterfield Blues Band? The original one with Mike Bloomfield, the first great guitar hero? Oh well, I didn't think so. Mark Naftalin, the original keyboardist, has started his own label, Winner, and is going to put out CDs that document the early years of this seminal band. The first was Strawberry Jam, which was okay, but the new one is **EAST-WEST LIVE**, and it's hot. Containing three live versions of the title cut which incorporated Indian and modal elements within a blues-rock format, this thing features amazing soloing from almost everyone involved. Even Elvin Bishop acquires himself pretty well, not an easy task when the other guitarist is Bloomfield.

The longest of the three tracks clocks in at a bit over twenty-eight minutes, so you get your money's worth. The recording is not fabulous, but this stuff was recorded in clubs in 66-67. Look for it in informed record shoppes . . . I would be remiss if I didn't mention some of the latest releases from Laswell's myriad projects and labels. The new Axiom effort is called **AXIOM DUB-MYSTERIES OF CREATION**: two CDs of dub-rhythm-trance by such luminaries as Sly and Robbie, The Orb, Material, Mad Professor, Dub Syndicate, Jah Wobble (you know Sid's pal John Wordle), and Godflesh offshoot Techno Animal. (To digress for a moment. You can take all your industrial hardcore, Ministry, Ms. Manson, et. al. and stick 'em. The last Godflesh disc, **SONGS OF LOVE AND HATE**, is the best that genre or sub-genre will ever produce. Hands down!) Anyway, Mr. Laswell has so many new works floating around it would be hard to find the

time to hear them all. His ambient work, however, doesn't exactly kill me. A little goes a long way. His latest solo thing, **OSCILLATIONS** on the SubRosa label isn't bad though. Keep a look out too for such upcoming projects as a Bob Marley dub disc; a Miles Davis ambient dub thing from Sony; a Praxis guitarfest with Page Hamilton, Justin Broadrick of Godflesh, Andy Hawkins and Ted Epstein from Blind Idiot God, and Buckethead; a Tetragramaton celebration with Byard Lancaster and Graham Haynes; and sparks from Third Rail courtesy of James Blood Ulmer, Laswell, Bernie Worrell, and Zigaboo Modeliste, the drummer from the Meters. An interesting slate of stuff to fill your ears . . . From Seattle's Sub Pop label look for **SUNDAY MORNING MUSIC** by a singer named Thornetta Davis who hails from Detroit. Sort of hard to categorize, but it basically rocks underneath her soulful vocals. This chick obviously spent some time in the church (a practice which the Pope heartily endorses) and you can hear it right away . . . I'm sitting here listening to Henry Rollins' new opus, **EVERYTHING**, and it's one of those spoken word deals, which would normally start annoying me after about five minutes, but what makes this listenable is the music squawking in the background donated by my friend Charles Gayle on

tenor and the great Rashied Ali on drums. These musical contributions certainly add a sense of urgency to Hank's street rap. Maybe he'll do us a favor and release a whole bunch of the music sans speeches. Sure! And maybe I'll take that Polish guy's place in Rome when he dies . . . For you guitar freaks out there, seek the new product from Time and Shockadelica six-string bender Jesse Johnson. Jesse calls it **BARE MY NAKED SOUL** and it's available on Dinosaur through BMG. Naked Soul is the hard rock guitar lp Prince should have done years ago: heavy, Hendrixy, feedback skrank with what could be His Glyphness singing. An impressive work . . . And speaking of impressive works, grab yourself a copy of Gilles Neret's **EROTICA UNIVERSALIS** a collection of stunning lubricious art works from the Stone Age to the present day. Sans scholarly text or commentary of any kind which, when you think about it, is always something of an intrusion in debauched compendiums of this sort . . . W. W. Norton has started a new imprint, Old School Books, which seeks to acquaint us with some overlooked and underappreciated black authors who toiled at their trade from about 1958 to 1975. Richard Wright these guys ain't, but they're just about as good. Ah hell, maybe better. These men wrote because they wanted

to and most of them didn't make a dime, dying in abject poverty and squalor. Norton has released four titles thus far and two are outstanding: **PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN DROWNING** by Charles Perry and **THE SCENE** by Clarence Cooper. Perry's book is a bleak, Oedipal nightmare that can be ranked alongside the best of Thompson, and Cooper's tome is, well, the real shit. Forget Algren, Chuck has the sauce. Hopefully sales will be large enough to enable the publisher to grace us with further volumes by brothers who knew they hadn't a prayer of making it but who wrote anyway. Because they had to. Our hats are off to them . . . For you seventies avant-gardists (if you can remember that far back) Geffen has seen fit to release a stunning five CD box set by the underrated Pere Ubu calling itself **DATAPANIK IN THE YEAR ZERO**. Yes, it is those Ubus. From the dreary city of Cleveland. The set contains virtually all of their studio work - about five lps worth - along with some EP tracks and two great live shows circa '78. It's amazing that the band were doing this sort of really weird shit back around the time of Andy Gibb, Donna Summer, and other wretched popsters. More impressively, to the Pope's ears, the music still sounds rather far out today. The enclosed book could be better, but who's complaining? And it's very reasonably priced as well.

Check it out but don't get caught paying too much . . . The IllumiNet Press, Box 2808, Lilburn, GA 30226, has recently published one of the most straightforward tomes in recent memory. It's called **OK BOMB** by Jim Keith, and you can guess what it deals with. Heavily footnoted, it covers the Oklahoma City bombing from A to Z, and then some. There are many unanswered questions about this tragedy, and one of the main ones seems to be why so many people knew that something bad was going to go down at the federal building on that day, among them a Circuit Court judge who was originally scheduled to preside over the trials of the "terrorists." If you see this book in the store, just pick it up and thumb through it for a few minutes, and if it doesn't make you a bit uncomfortable, then you probably voted for Trent Lott. Check this one out . . . The lunatics at Headpress magazine in the U.K. have collected some of the best and wildest early articles from out-of-print issues into one big volume called **CRITICAL VISION**, and it's got some wonderful things in it. There's a nice piece on the Children Of God, now usually going by the name The Family. You remember these guys: River Phoenix was raised by them and started having sex at about the age of ten or so. The Family got into some trouble down in South America, but they're still around. Hell, they even have a nice place about six

miles from yours truly down here in Washington, and you occasionally see members at some of the bigger malls. Another great article deals with the Sunset Strip slayings, credited to Carol Bundy (no relation to Ted) and Douglas Clark. Bundy copped a plea and claimed Clark killed 'em all to get a lighter sentence. Clark says that Bundy did them herself, and that all he's guilty of is being twisted and sexually aberrated. I don't know. I recently saw a documentary on The Learning Channel and they had an interview with Clark, and he seemed pretty scary to me. In any case, the selections in this oversize trade paperback make interesting reading for those of you who like something a wee bit different. But then don't we all????

For fans of the original punk magazine, **PUNK**, you can stop bemoaning the fact that your mother threw out those early issues because editor John Holstrom has reprinted some of the best articles and interviews in a nice oversized trade paperback. 1976 to 1981 is the scope. The primal years. We get the hilarious "Lou Reed: Rock and Roll Vegetable," some Richard Hell chatter and an afternoon with Iggy Pop. And fabulous pictures. An endearing look back at a movement that changed absolutely nothing. But not for trying. . . . Also from Creation we have a thing called **NECRONOM-ICON**

**BOOK ONE** a handsome volume of horror film essays. Lavishly illustrated but unfortunately written as if the bulk of it was commissioned for Film Comment or Sight and Sound. Which wouldn't be a problem for the Pope except for the fact that these guys are writing about Pete Walker, Jean Rollin, Barbara Steele, etc. I mean, we're not talking "The Magnificent Ambersons" here; these are horror movies. Maybe your Pontiff hasn't fully recovered from those horrible operations those damn cardinals put me through but these pieces seem a bit too high-brow for their subject matter. To paraphrase our esteemed editor, who the hell is going to take a doctoral dissertation of Jesse Franco seriously? However, you may still want to check this attractively laid-out publication as it's part of an on-going series and things will almost certainly improve down the road . . . Finally, look for **DREADFUL PLEASURES** a zine stuffed with terrific exploitation poster art and packed with hilarious reviews of drive-in fare. Now that Gore Gazette has apparently bitten the dust, Mike Accomando has manfully chosen to shoulder the burden of chronicling the golden days of the grindhouse ( \$3 for sample, 650 Prospect Ave, Fairview, NJ 07022)

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